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19

Rokujouma no Shinryakusha!? - Volume 19

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六畳間の侵略者!? 19

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BOOK☆WALKER
special edition

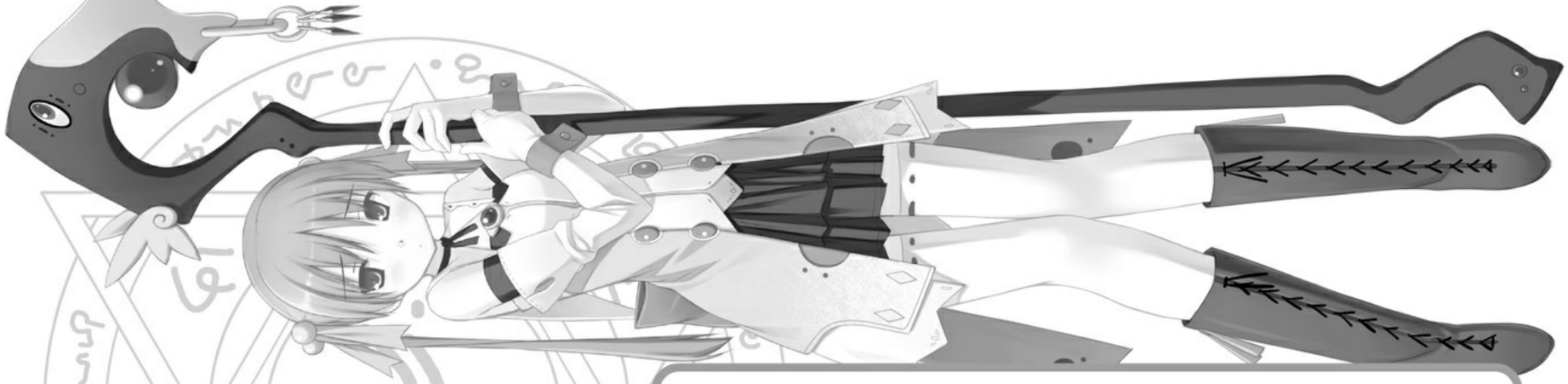
六畳間の侵略者!? 19
「それでは、任務を開始します！」
ゲートの向こうは……
“魔法の国”!?

「……そうか、
そういうことだったのか……」
「そんなっ、嘘でしょう!?」
あの城の
シルエットは
……!!
フォルサリア魔法王国
建国に繋がる
“運命”とは!?

「待っていて、海。
レインボウハートを始末して、
すぐにそこから出してあげるわ……」

Corona Convention

NEW! 2010/9/30



Article 22
Those who have ratified the Corona Convention are given the right to hold a birthday party for others who have ratified the convention. However, depending on the circumstances, the birthday party may be held up to a week earlier or a week later.

Article 22 Postscript
Haven't you forgotten my birthday!? It's September 18th!!

Faraway Days

Part 1

Wednesday, September 15

Marina and Kai first met at their common workplace, which was the magical kingdom of Folsaria's regular army, Rainbow Heart. Marina was a new magical girl, and Kai was a soldier in charge of her guard. While magicians were strong, they required time to cast spells, so when used in squads it was common for guards to buy that time.

They were both young and of different gender, which lead to them often clashing after just becoming partners. However after completing many missions together, the sense of antagonism between them gradually lessened. Eventually the two fell in love and became partners in both public and private. After that, Marina decided that she would retire and marry Kai.

While she had decided to marry, her present mission was still ongoing. After completing it, she would retire and marry. Marina was ecstatic, but she was calm enough to not let that affect her mission. As expected of a magical girl who had been active for a long time.

The last time they would partner up for a job was a somewhat dangerous one. The mission was to infiltrate the mansion of someone suspected of being a necromancer, and obtaining evidence of illegal actions. In the magical kingdom of Folsaria, personal use of magic was strictly restricted. Necromancy-type magic in particular was often used for evil, so even when requested for, its use was often not permitted. The person in question was suspected of using necromancy, but there was no evidence and as such, impossible to make an arrest. There, Marina and Kai were given the mission to infiltrate the mansion

and find evidence.

“To think we'd have to infiltrate despite this much evidence...”

Kai looked up at the mansion in the dark and let out an exaggerated sigh. The mansion was far from the city and left a cruel and lonely impression. Marina called out to Kai. Kai was large, so Marina was looking up at him, who was looking up at the mansion.

“Don't complain. We can only prove that they have bought prohibited goods from their account book. It's no where near as heavy of a crime as necromancy”

Before coming here, the two had made a preliminary investigation. Being a public institution, they couldn't enter someone's house without a well-grounded reason. From their preliminary investigation they found that the owner of this mansion had purchased materials required for necromancy. However, the weight of the crime would greatly differ depending on if that type of spell had been used or not. Thus they had no choice but to infiltrate the mansion to get a closer look.

“I know that too”

“Fufufu, now that I think about it, you weren't so good with ghosts and zombies, were you?”

“You're the strange one being fine with them”

“Aha, doesn't that make you just as strange, seeing as you're taking that kind of woman as your wife?”

“I'm aware”

“How rude”

”You said it yourself!”

The two casually chatted as they worked together to climb over the wall around the mansion. The large Kai served as a stepping stone to allow for Marina to climb over first. Marina then pulled Kai over from the top. Their teamwork was perfect, showing their experience as partners and the depth of their trust.

“You're a bit heavy. Why don't you diet a little for your new partner?”

While Marina would retire, Kai would continue serving as a guard for Rainbow Heart's magicians. Of course, Kai would partner with a new magician. Marina was a little worried about that new partner.

“I'll think about it if it's a cute girl”

“Geez!”

”Haha, nobody is cuter than you though”

“It's always just flattery!”

It looked like there was no reason to worry. Marina felt relief as she looked at Kai's cheerful smile. However that was as long as Marina and Kai could enjoy themselves. The two wordlessly nodded at each other and jumped down from the wall, landing without sound inside of the premise.

“...The problems start here”

”Let's just go at it like normal”

”Yeah”

Having entered the premise, the witty atmosphere from seconds before vanished. It was time for them to act as members of Rainbow Heart.

Part 2

When using large-scale magic, a magic circle and a ritual was required. Magic circles were like storehouses that stored a large amount of magical power, while at the same time being a circuit capable of creating specific effects. For that sake, a secure surrounding was a necessity, such as a basement made of stone. The basement also had the benefit of being out of the public eye. This time was the same, and a magic circle had been prepared underground.

“It seems like the magic circle isn't complete yet... is this smaller magic circle for experimenting?”

“Just what were they planning on doing with a magic circle this large...?”

Marina and Kai found magic circles in the basement. This confirmed the suspicions of necromancy, but the size of the circle was strange. The magic circle they found was so large, that it could be used to summon hundreds of departed souls. It was a dangerous formation that could destroy an entire city.

“...I want to revive my granddaughter, young lady from Rainbow Heart”

Suddenly, a voice came from behind Kai and Marina. When they hurriedly turned around, they saw an elderly person.

“Who are you!?”

”That's my line, young one”

”You're...”

The two had seen that person before. When they had observed the mansion earlier on, they had confirmed all of the residents. This was the master of the house, Gazan.

“I am Gazan Saiga, the master of this mansion”

”Gazan-san, stop this at once!”

The elderly man wanted to revive his granddaughter. While his objective was understandable, the cost was too high. All kinds of things could be done with magic, but reviving someone who had once lost their life was difficult. The required magical power was all too great, an enormous investment in a magical power generation device, or a great deal of sacrifices was required. Based on the type of magic circle, the elderly man had chosen the latter. Sooner or later, many would be sacrificed here. Marina couldn't accept that, and reviving the dead was forbidden in Folsaria. That's why Marina tried her best to get him to stop.

“...Young lady, you still haven't experienced what its like to lose something truly precious, have you?”

“Eh?”

Marina was puzzled by the elderly man's unexpected words. He looked at her with pity in his glance, or it might be that the glance was directed at his past self.

“After losing my granddaughter... after losing something truly important, what do you think remains?”

“That's...”

Marina couldn't answer the elderly man's question. Like he had said, Marina hadn't experienced losing something truly important.

“Desire. The kind of desire you would feel when you're dying for water in a scorching desert. Why is there no water nearby... why is my granddaughter not here, the thirst is all on your mind”

At that moment, Marina saw insanity within the elderly man's eyes. The elderly man grieved the absence of that important to him, and in his desire, he touched upon the taboo. He wanted to recover that important to him even if he had to go against the laws of nature. As it were, his thirst grew to such lengths that he would kill his companions to rob them of their water. He no longer had any hesitation to sacrifice the lives of others.

“Marina, it's no use talking to him”

Kai drew his weapon after listening to the elderly man. Seeing that, Marina's eyes shot open wide.

“Kai! You can't! Gazan-san will understand if we talk to him!”

“We don't have enough water to satisfy his thirst. It's very regrettable...”

Marina didn't understand, but Kai did. He had experienced the loss the elderly man was talking about, he had lost his little sister. That's why he understood the elderly man's determination. In this situation, Marina's kindness could invite a fatal outcome. Kai simply couldn't let that happen, as she would become his wife.

“Young one, you're right. Your lives aren't enough to revive my granddaughter! Not at all!”

That was when four ornament armors, one in each corner of the room, began moving. The armors smoothly unsheathed their swords, as if there were people inside and attacked Marina and Kai from all sides.

“You only have two futures! Quietly becoming sacrifices, or dying right now!”

The elderly man was controlling the four living armors. He would capture Marina and Kai and use them as sacrifices. Marina in particular was a magician, and had a high aptitude as a sacrifice. And if that wasn't possible, they would be disposed of so that they couldn't get in the way. The elderly man had let the two walk freely all the way to his basement just for this.

“Gazan-san, please listen!”

“It's not possible! Nobody will be able to reach that old man now!”

Getting attacked from all sides was bad. Kai pulled on Marina's hand as she was still trying to talk to the elderly man and headed towards one of the living armors. Whether they could destroy one of the armors before they could group up would determine the outcome. By doing that, they could keep their backs clear.

“But Kai, doing something this sad for the person they love is—”

“You can still talk to him after destroying the armors!”

“O-Okay!”

Marina felt reluctant, but she would indeed be able to talk with the elderly man after the living armors had been destroyed and things had calmed down. That's why the living armor would be destroyed first, having decided on that she began her incantation with her cane in hand.

“Enhance Weapon!”

Marina cast a spell to enhance the power of Kai's sword. When the two fought together, having Kai use his sword skills and Marina add her magical power on it gave them the most attack power. When it came to destroying the living armor swiftly, this method was the best.

“Marina, slow down the other armors!”

Leaving those words behind, Kai charged at the armor in front of him. The combined power of the two easily cut through the living armor's sword and right arm.

“Leave it to me! Magnetic Field!”

Marina created a powerful magnetic field around the area where the other

three armors were. The steel armors were caught in the field and stopped moving.

However, the restraints using this method was not perfect. While they were caught in the magnetic field, they slowly crawled forward. The magical power within them was greater than expected.

“Kai! They're stronger than I thought! Hurry!”

There was a limit to how long Marina could stop the armors from moving. It was vital that Kai defeated one of the living armor's as quickly as possible.

“Leave it to me!”

The sword swung using both hands sliced the living armor in half. Marina's magical power was powerful, but Kai's skill with the sword was quite impressive as well. Not satisfied with having destroyed one of the armors, he headed towards a second. Seeing that, Marina changed the shape of the magnetic field. She couldn't allow Kai to get caught up in the magnetic field.

“I won't let you interfere! She will soon be revived!”

However, the elderly man wasn't about to just let that happen. Brandishing the cane in his hand, he began incanting. He himself was responsible for the magic circle and the creation of the living armors. He himself was a powerful magician.

“Deadly Cloud!”

The elderly man unleashed a cursed cloud that drained life force. It was an evil necromancy spell that could only be used for murder. The pitch black cloud enveloped Kai along the three living armors. His allies were armors moving by the power of magic, so this spell didn't affect them. It was a clever attack that would only defeat Kai.

“Kai!”

”Don't worry!”

Kai held his breath before the cloud surrounded him. This cursed cloud took effect after being inhaled. Since Kai was knowledgeable in magic, he didn't receive the curse of death.

“I'll dispel it right away! Just hang in there for a moment!”

“...”

Instead of replying to Marina, Kai defeated one of the nearby armors. Marina felt some relief upon seeing that, and calmly incanted her spell. She had to do something about the black cloud first of all.

“Greater Dispelling!”

“...”

Hearing Marina cast her spell, Kai defeated yet another armor, leaving only one left. Wanting to finish this before Marina's spell took effect, Kai swung his sword back towards the final armor.

The last armor fell down as the parts scratched against each other and made a shrill noise. The next moment, Marina's spell activated, erasing the black cloud. It was exactly the outcome the two had aimed for.

“I've got you!”

However, that was the exact opening the elderly man had waited for. By creating the black cloud, the elderly man had concealed what he himself was doing. Their view was limited and they couldn't see past the armors. Moreover, the lethal cloud was useful for distracting the two. As a result, the two hadn't been able to see through what the elderly man was planning. Kai was focused on the living armors, and Marina was too busy erasing the cloud. The elderly man used that opening to prepare another spell. And just as Marina used her own spell to erase the cloud.

“Die, damned Rainbow Heart!!”

As the black cloud vanished, Kai showed his defenseless side to the elderly man. After casting a spell, Marina couldn't do anything. The spell the elderly man had prepared, the arrow made from negative life force, was fired at Kai. Unlike Marina, Kai was a normal human. There were countless others that were just as good as sacrifices as him. The elderly man's plan was to kill Kai first.

“Oh no!?”

The dark purple colored magical arrow hit Kai just where the elderly man

aimed. Kai couldn't dodge it, and Marina couldn't cast a spell to protect him.

“KAIIIII!!”

Like that, Marina lost something truly important. And at the same time, she understood what the elderly man meant by desire.

Part 3

Dark Purple woke up from her own scream. Looking at her hand reached up towards the ceiling, she realized that she had been dreaming.

Ever since she lost her lover, Kai, she had seen this dream several times over, and lost her lover every time. For each time, the desire the elderly man spoke of grew stronger. Right now, she fully understood how the elderly man felt. She believed her past self, that wanted to convince the elderly man, was nothing but a fool.

“...Just a while longer, just a little longer... once Rainbow Heart is defeated, I can revive Kai... I can go back to those past days...”

Having lost Kai, Marina killed the elderly man. Entrusting herself to the rage of having lost her lover, she easily ended the man's life. She then inherited the elderly man's research in order to revive Kai. Just like with the elderly man, her desire made her do that.

However, her experience as a member of Rainbow Heart warned her. At this rate, Rainbow Heart would get in the way. That's why she turned to Darkness Rainbow. With her talent, attachment and desire, it didn't take long for her to become one of the leaders.

Like that, Marina became Dark Purple, and began moving to defeat Rainbow Heart. In order to move her research to an even greater scale, Rainbow Heart had to be destroyed first. She didn't care, even if she had to go up against her past allies. She was no longer Marina, but Dark Purple, a magical girl of Darkness Rainbow.

“...Just wait a little longer, Kai... my beloved... I'll take care of Rainbow Heart and pull you out from there...”

Purple looked up at a nearby glass, cylinder-shaped tank. Inside was the corpse of man, floating in preservation fluid. It was the corpse of Purple's lover who she wanted to revive more than anything. Purple stared at his corpse for a while, with her eyes full of deep love, insanity and desire, while repeating to herself that the decisive battle was close, and so was her reunion with her lover.

Prisoner Life

Wednesday, September 15

The children who had been kidnapped by Darkness Rainbow to be used for a ritual were fortunately unharmed and healthy. The ritual itself had been 20% completed, and the children had been drained of that much spiritual energy. That said, spiritual energy wasn't drained equally, rather there was individual differences, from over 10% to just under 20%. Additionally, only children with a large amount of spiritual energy were targeted, so that amount was still on the level of a normal human. While that was similar to having their lives as magicians stolen, it wouldn't have much more influence on the children than that.

Taking the children's mental state into consideration, all of their memories concerning the event were deleted and they were sent back to their parents. It wasn't hard to imagine that the fear created from being held captives to be used as sacrifice over several days would leave a mental scar. Erasing the children's memories was a necessary measure. However, simply erasing the memories would confuse the children, so their memories were overwritten with different memories. They were given memories of confinement, inspired by children's' shows, that wouldn't leave a trauma, and memories of being rescued. Right around now, the children would be telling their parents how they were saved by Harukazeman.

Even then, as this was a major incident, an insurance was required. So the Sun Rangers made a move in the background. The Sun Rangers, and the government they worked for, didn't want to create friction between them and the magical kingdom of Folsaria, so they gladly cooperated. With Rainbow Heart involved, they didn't want to create an enemy out of all of Folsaria.

Thus, the serial kidnapping stopped. The only remaining problem was the treatment of Dark Crimson who was captured at the very end.

When those related to Rainbow Heart were operating in Japan, what they needed was a place to live. Most of the time, this was made possible by cooperators in Japan. The dwellings obtained from that were often used as safe houses. Safe houses had defensive spells cast on them in order to not be detected by Darkness Rainbow, and held various magical items for communication and transportation. That's why there were suitable places to hold Dark Crimson even though she had been caught in Japan.

Crimson was presently confined within a warehouse of a certain safe house. This warehouse could be used as a prison in case of an emergency and had various defensive and obstructive spells cast on it. Because of that it would be next to impossible to escape, even for a leader of Darkness Rainbow once her cane had been confiscated. Knowing that, she obediently sat on her chair facing the people that had come to interrogate her. Those people were Koutarou, Yurika and Kiriha.

“Crimson-san, please tell us. Where is Darkness Rainbow's base?”

Yurika asked Crimson with a serious expression. In order to finish this once and for all, Yurika had decided to attack Darkness Rainbow's base directly. The only one that knew the information she wanted was Dark Crimson. Yurika had a serious look in her eyes and spoke in a serious tone.

“Who knows, where was it now again...”

However, Crimson wouldn't tell her that easily. She had been offered immunity if she gave up magic and information, but Crimson's feelings didn't move. She couldn't throw away her feelings of wanting to be stronger than anyone else. They were feelings that had caused her to fight against even her friend.

“Then when will Darkness Rainbow attack Rainbow Heart?”

“Who knows, when was it now again...”

“Crimson-san, at this rate all of Folsaria will become a battlefield! Nothing good will happen regardless who wins!”

Both Rainbow Heart and Darkness Rainbow had a small military force in the eyes of Japan. However, because Folsaria was small, if both forces were to face each other there would be a lot of victims. Moreover, with new technology

united with magic, the entire country might even be burnt to the ground. Yurika wanted to avoid that no matter what and decided to go on the offensive.

“I don't know”

However, Crimson's answer was curt. The most precious thing to her wasn't life or love, but getting stronger through fighting. She couldn't care less about what happened to her country.

“Crimson-san!”

”I can't tell you what I don't know”

“That's a lie!”

“Even if I knew, there's no way I'd just tell you. It's top secret you know”

”T-That's...”

“If you just have to know, why don't you try torturing me? I might just speak up”

”Ugh...”

Yurika was at a loss for words. Even though she had resolved herself, she was fundamentally unsuited for rough stuff and bargaining, leaving her unable to respond to Crimson. Seeing Yurika like that, Koutarou lent her a helping hand.

“If Rainbow Heart's and Darkness Rainbow's battle comes to an end, there won't be anyone to fight you. Wouldn't that be the worst kind of torture for you?”

Koutarou spoke to Crimson as he put his hand on Yurika's shoulder. Yurika looked up at Koutarou with slight relief. Crimson on the other hand showed a defiant smile at Koutarou's words.

“That's an interesting thought, I didn't think of that. But... yeah, I might create another anti-government organization. Fighting against Darkness Rainbow to compete over who is the strongest sounds fun too”

Crimson was unfazed. To her, it didn't really matter who she fought against. If needed, she didn't mind making Darkness Rainbow an enemy. Fighting really was Crimson's meaning to life.

“What do you think, Kiriha-san?”

”At this rate, we really won't get any information unless we torture her. That said, chances are she wouldn't talk even if we did”

Kiriha didn't think Crimson was someone who would easily talk. Moreover, Koutarou and the others didn't like methods like torturing, nor did they have the time for it. Crimson was confident because she was sure she could endure short-term torture, and if she did, her allies would put their plan into action. Once the battle between Darkness Rainbow and Rainbow Heart began, it didn't really matter if the location of their base was revealed.

“Yurika, can't you use magic to read her mind?”

If a frontal attack was impossible, they would go with a magician's method. Koutarou looked to Yurika for their last hope.

“If we're up against someone cooperative it's simple, but major preparations will be needed for someone so hostile”

However, Yurika shook her head. It wasn't easy to read someone's mind. Even more so when the other party was a magician as well.

“So we're stuck...”

Koutarou dropped his shoulders. Crimson wasn't working with them on their interrogation, and they didn't have the time for any other method. As a source of information, Crimson was inadequate.

“Koutarou, there is something I would personally like to ask her, do you mind?”

Waiting for the talks to stop, Kiriha made a proposition to Koutarou. There was actually something that she had been wanting to ask Darkness Rainbow for quite a while.

“Hm? Yeah”

Koutarou nodded right away. He didn't think Kiriha would ask something pointless at this time, so he had no problems with it. He made room for Kiriha and she moved up to Crimson.

“Crimson, there's something I want you to tell me”

Kiriha looked straight at Crimson, she responded by looking back at Kiriha.

“That depends on what it is”

“This isn't related to Darkness Rainbow's strategy”

”...Say it. If I can answer it I will”

Crimson had no intentions of talking about the battle between Darkness Rainbow and Rainbow Heart, but she had no intentions to keep her lips completely sealed for everything. Kiriha was a powerful enemy, but she wasn't someone unpleasant, and Crimson was interested in what Kiriha wanted to ask. At the same time she wanted to gather information on Koutarou and the others.

“I'm sure you know Darkness Rainbow and the People of the Earth's radical faction worked together”

“Yes, they moved together for a couple of things”

Crimson had heard a brief explanation from Maya, so she knew of the relationship between Darkness Rainbow and the radical faction. The two sides had been working together since eleven years back. However, Crimson couldn't say it just like that. She carefully chose her words to respond. She didn't want to slip up and give Kiriha unnecessary information.

“However, that is strange”

The very fact that Darkness Rainbow and the radical faction worked together was what Kiriha had her doubts about.

“Strange? What is?”

Crimson didn't think so, and she furrowed her brows.

“The radical faction was made up of a lot of prideful individuals. It is strange for them to work together with outsides, even if those are magicians or not. I was hoping you could tell me the reason why if you know”

The radical faction believed that they were the people chosen by God. That's why they generally subdued others rather than working with them. Their grudge was primarily against surface dwellers, but hadn't assumed that people from different planets would exist, and normally magicians would be treated the same way as surface dwellers. Kiriha didn't believe the radical faction would change

their mind because the other party could use magic.

“I see, that's what you're talking about. Maya did call them disgusting”

Crimson smiled as she thought of the expression Maya had shown back then. The normally cool and intelligent Maya showing such a bitter expression was rare, and as a result it clearly remained in Crimson's memories.

“Could you tell me?”

”Sure. It's not like we'll lose out on anything”

Crimson nodded at Kiriha's request. After searching her memories for a moment, she began speaking in a cheerful tone. Maya's expression in her memories had been quite amusing.

“It's simple. According to Maya, we Folsarians and you underground people are from the same people that split up long ago”

“Is that true!?”

However, hearing that, Kiriha's smile vanished. She forgot about her normal calmness and instinctively pressed Crimson. Her actions surprised Crimson as well and her eyes opened wide.

“Y-Yes... Maya showed me some old slab some time ago. Some kind of crest was carved into it, and she said that was the proof. We're, what did you call it? The so called lost seventh race?”

“The lost seventh tribe?”

“Yeah, that one”

”...So that's what it was... that's why the radical faction...”

Kiriha was aghast and convinced at the same time. She believed that Crimson was telling the truth. She had no reason to lie, and what she was saying made sense. If the radical faction and the magical kingdom of Folsaria were indeed past countrymen, the radical faction wouldn't hesitate to lend their strength.

If Folsarians are the lost seventh tribe, I'll have to talk with father about this...

When it came to the seventh lost tribe, Kiriha had heard the legends of them many times. They were a miraculous tribe that could use strange techniques.

However, that had been nothing more than fairy tales, she didn't know any of the actual details. Confirming the accurate legend was needed. Of course, she'd have to ask that after this commotion has settled.

“Folsaria and the People of the Earth are countrymen!? Yurika, did you know!?”

”No! This is the first I've heard of it! I would have told you sooner if I knew!!”

Koutarou and Yurika who were listening in were unable to hide their surprise. However, having seen the elitist Tayuma and Maguz, this sounded really convincing.

“To think the underground and the world of magic had a real connection on top of their mutual interests...”

After Koutarou muttered that, the room fell silent. Koutarou's and the others surprise was large, that's why Crimson was the one to break the silence.

“...You... Koutarou was it?”

“Hm? Ah...”

Hearing Crimson's voice, Koutarou returned to himself. He changed gears and turned towards her.

“Can I ask you something this time?”

”That depends on the content”

“It's a private question”

“Then I'll think about it after I've heard it”

“Thank you”

Crimson showed a happy smile as Koutarou approved her request and began talking.

“I want to ask about Maki”

“About Aika-san, no, Dark Navy?”

Koutarou felt a chill as he was asked something completely unexpected. Darkness Rainbow should still be thinking that Maki was captured and being

controlled by Koutarou and the others. If he said something unnecessary, Maki would be in danger, so he needed to answer carefully.

“Call her Aika-san. Maki... she chose to live as Aika Maki over Dark Navy”

”You...”

Hearing Crimson's words, Koutarou realized that she had noticed Maki's betrayal. However, he couldn't accept it as reality. If her betrayal was revealed, Maki would be targeted. At the very least, that had to be avoided.

“I have no intentions of getting along with the enemy”

“Fufu... don't worry. I have no intentions of reporting Maki to Darkness Rainbow”

”...What?”

Koutarou's eyes shot wide open. He was surprised that she knew about Maki's betrayal, and even more so by the fact that Crimson wouldn't expose it. Crimson seemed to enjoy herself as she watched Koutarou's reaction.

“We had a friendly relationship before. Besides... we'll end up fighting to the death either way, so the outcome is the same, right?”

”...So you were Aika-san's friend”

Koutarou gave up on trying to hide it. Crimson had understood everything. Lying any further had no point.

“I don't know if I could call us that now. But in the past we definitely were”

Crimson's shoulders dropped as she spoke. The time Crimson and Maki had been able to be friends in the truest sense of the word, had been very short. But that period had certainly existed. That's why Crimson didn't report Maki, and asked Koutarou.

“Please tell me, Koutarou. Why did Maki choose you?”

Based on Maki's speech and behavior, she had a rough idea of it all. However, she wanted to hear it from Koutarou. It wasn't a necessary question, but that was proof of Crimson's friendship with Maki.

“Aika-san didn't choose me”

“Eh?”

”Aika-san chose us and her classmates. And we chose Aika-san. Our relationship isn't one-sided. We make up for what the other lacks”

Maki couldn't bear the solitude and distrust, and desired love and bonds. And the ones that had that were Koutarou and the others and her friends at school. Koutarou and the others welcomed Maki. They realized that she was yet another lonely soul.

“Hmm...”

“Though you might not understand even if I tell you”

”That's not true. Our priorities are different, but it's not like I don't understand”

Crimson slowly shook her head to the side and showed a faint smile made from happiness and loneliness. Koutarou's answer was something she couldn't provide for Maki.

“I see”

”Thank you, Koutarou”

With their discussion over, Crimson thanked Koutarou. Loneliness was no longer present in her expression.

“You don't have to thank for me that”

”You're right. But I want to learn about Maki”

Crimson who put fighting as her top priority couldn't save Maki. That said, it wasn't like she wasn't concerned about Maki. So she was happy that Maki had obtained a world she could live in.

“...Hey, Crimson”

Crimson's smile was so refreshing that Koutarou couldn't help but ask a question he already knew the answer of.

“What?”

”Is there... really no way for you to stop fighting?”

”Could you throw away Maki?”

Fighting for Crimson, was the same as Maki was to Koutarou. She couldn't throw it away, as it was something deeply embedded into her very existence.

“...I'm sorry to hear that, Crimson”

Koutarou had expected Crimson's answer, but still felt sad. They could understand each other, but their wishes just barely couldn't reach. It was truly regrettable.

“Koutarou, you really are a lot like Maki. That's why Maki chose you”

“I think Aika-san wanted to choose you”

Koutarou had reached that conclusion after talking to Crimson. She simply desired fighting, but it wasn't like she hated others. Koutarou could imagine what Maki would feel for her.

“I couldn't accept that. This happening was fate”

Crimson chose fighting over friendship. Thus, the twos path split.

“This might be strange for me to say, but... please don't let go of Maki, Koutarou”

”You don't have to tell me twice”

“Then I have no more need to worry about Maki”

”Now all that's left is to fight?”

“You really are just like Maki. That's right, Koutarou”

Crimson handed over all of her feelings for Maki to Koutarou. She believed that he would take care of Maki instead of her, and do an even better job of it.

“This might be strange for me to say too, but... don't die, Crimson”

”There's no guarantee of that. Especially when I'm going up against you”

”...I'm glad we could talk, Crimson”

”Me too”

Koutarou's and Crimson's discussion came to an end. Crimson was no longer thinking of anything but fighting. She had become a demon that only desired to

fight. Words would no longer reach her.

After Koutarou and the others left, Maki entered as if she was replacing them. She was there to give Crimson her food. While Crimson felt a little nervous dealing with Koutarou and the others, she didn't feel the same way when facing Maki alone. She lazily leaned back on the chair she was sitting on and yawned.

“Fuaaaaaaa...”

”You seem bored, Crimson”

Maki smiled wryly as she placed the dinner on the table in front of Crimson. She would no longer call Crimson by her real name. They both knew that they were now on different paths. She was here now because having someone Crimson used to be friends with care for her would make things easier.

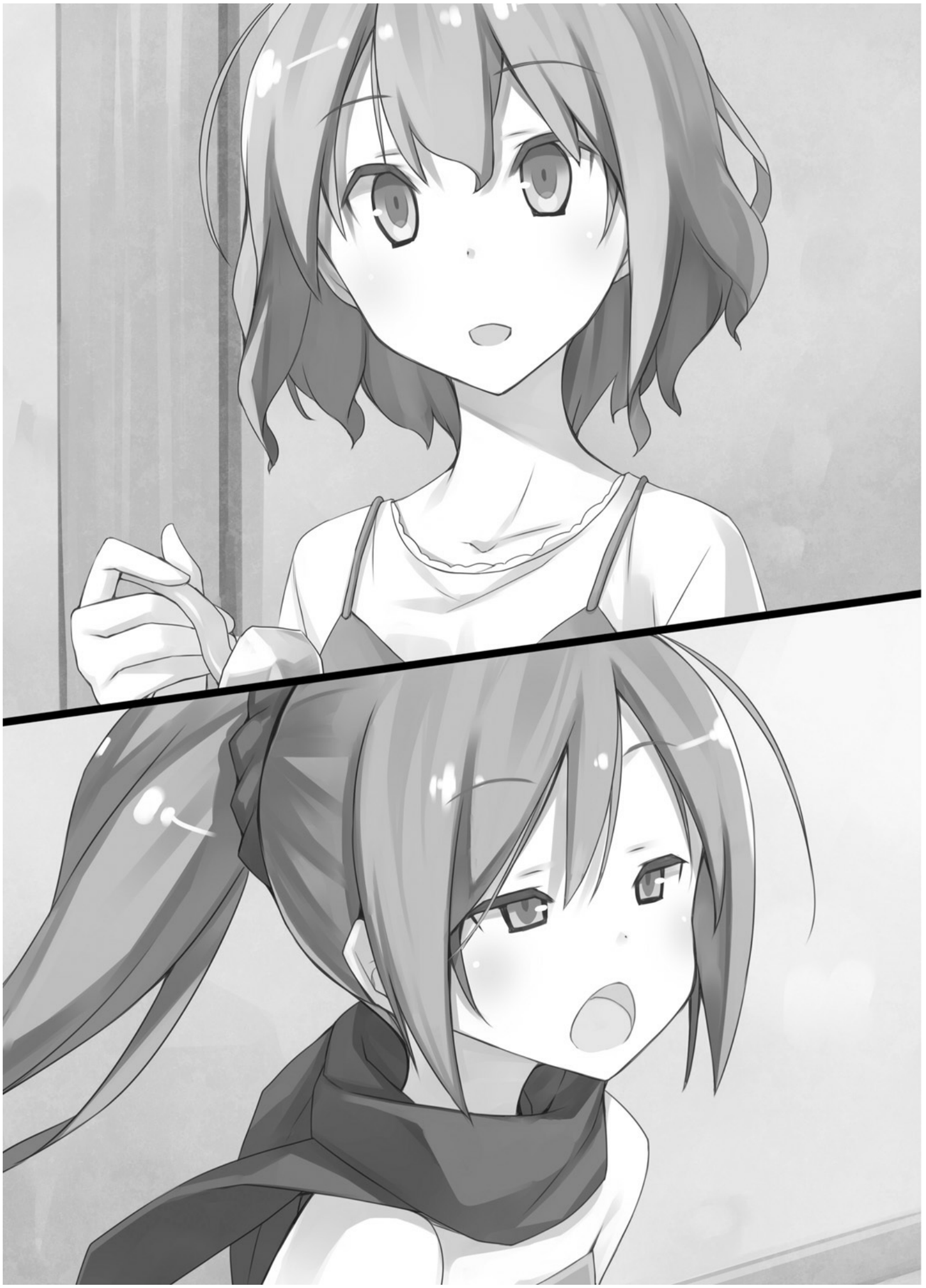
“Who wouldn't when you're forced to sit down and talk all day”

“Well, you're doing something you're not used to after all”

“Hey Maki, could you remove these handcuffs? I won't start any trouble”

It was difficult eating when restrained. Crimson showed her handcuffs to Maki, appealing to her that she at least be allowed to use her arms.

“You might not, but if Darkness Rainbow shows up, that'll be trouble”



Maki believed that Crimson wouldn't cause any trouble if she removed

Crimson's handcuffs. Crimson was simple-minded, and she knew that Maki hated lies, so Crimson had never lied to Maki. She probably wouldn't now either. However, Maki couldn't disregard the chances of Darkness Rainbow attacking, and therefore couldn't afford to remove the handcuffs.

“...Organizations sure are a pain”

”You just lack the awareness that you're part of an organization”

“Hm... then at least help me eat”

”Okay, grandma”

“Who are you calling grandma!”

Maki pulled up a nearby chair and sat down next to Crimson to help her eat.

“Ugh”

”Don't eat in such a hurry. Here, water”

“*gulp gulp*... thank you, Maki”

”You're welcome”

Maki had a cheerful expression on her face as she helped Crimson eat. Crimson believed that was because Maki knew she wouldn't attack her at this moment, but she didn't think that was all there was to it.

“Maki, you really are a bit strange”

Crimson stopped eating and peeked at Maki's face.

“Really?”

Maki tilted her head in confusion. She wasn't really aware of it herself.

“You never said jokes before”

”That's right. It's thanks to Satomi-kun and everyone else”

Before, she likened Crimson being unable to move to a grandma, and thinking about it, she had never acted like that in the past. This was clearly the influence of Koutarou and the girls of room 106.

“You've gotten what you wished for huh”

“Yes. That's why I will protect it until the end”

”That's good. Make sure you protect it”

The two were on different paths, but they weren't narrow minded enough to be hostile for no reason. Crimson earnestly rejoiced for Maki. And Maki was the same.

“So Crimson, how about you?”

“Oh, even more interrogation?”

“That's not my intentions. I meant if you are having a satisfying fight”

”Ah... now might be the most fun. I got to fight against the strong you, and the decisive battle with Rainbow Heart is near. I'll have no other complaints if I get to fight Satomi Koutarou or Kasagi Shizuka”

“That would be troublesome for us though, though I personally want you to be satisfied”

”A difficult standpoint, isn't it?”

“Yes. Having such a troublesome friend sure is a pain”

Just like Crimson wished for Maki to be happy, Maki did the same for Crimson. If fighting and getting stronger was her wish, Maki wanted her to realize it. But unfortunately, at the moment, that meant that would mean that Maki and Crimson would fight.

“That's right, this is related to that, but... Crimson, you will be moved soon”

”Moved? To where?”

“Folsaria. Keeping you here is like asking Darkness Rainbow to attack. Besides, having you actually struggle would be problematic. That said, increasing the guard here would leave Folsaria undermanned”

Even a fully prepared safe house would be in trouble if Darkness Rainbow made a serious attempt to retake Crimson. Moving her to Rainbow Hearts base for a more secure guard was only logical.

“That's true”

Crimson said as she smiled wryly and shrugged.

Moving, huh... fufu...

However her eyes weren't laughing in the slightest.

“Please take it easy here until then. You've been quite busy lately haven't you?”

”Yes, I'll do just that. Once I'm done eating”

”Okay, okay, say aahh”

”Aahh”

Crimson's eyes remained sharp for just a moment. She soon returned to her usual self and started eating again. Of course, Maki started helping again as well. The two didn't talk about fighting again. Until Crimson finished eating and Maki left, they carefreely chatted away. They looked like anything but enemies.

The Magical Kingdom of Folsaria

Part 1

Saturday, September 18

A few days after Crimson had been captured, she would be moved to Folsaria after careful planning had been made. The majority of the preparations concerned Folsaria's, or more accurately Rainbow Heart's, reception of Crimson and of her imprisonment. They had to make plans for all kinds of incidents that might occur when holding one of Darkness Rainbow's leaders.

Yurika was in charge of the transportation. She was technically one of Rainbow Heart's strongest seven, an arc-wizard. It was only natural that she would end up becoming the person in charge on site. That Yurika in question was currently having a meeting with the transportation team from Folsaria at the safe house.

“...Koutarou, do you really think we'll be okay with Yurika in charge?”

Sanae-chan stopped packing her own backpack and anxiously looked at Yurika's back. It wasn't unreasonable for someone who knew Yurika to be anxious about her being in charge.

“Y-You can't say that, Sanae-chan! That's rude!”

Sanae-san (the personality that had always resided in Sanae's body) reprimanded Sanae-chan(the former 'ghost'), but in the end they were the same person. Sanae-san was also worried about Yurika being in charge.

“Don't worry. Yurika, at times like this, will be fine”

Koutarou, however, wasn't worried about Yurika in the slightest. Yurika could be trusted when it really mattered. Koutarou's experience up until now told him

that.

“That's not the face you make when you say something will be fine”

While Koutarou had said things would be fine, he seemed somewhat in a bad mood. Sanae-chan who was only half-attached to her body could clearly sense that.

“Uhm, Sanae-chan, Koutarou-san doesn't like situations that make Yurika become serious”

”Hmm, that's pretty complicated, Koutarou”

”...It's not like it's just Yurika”

Koutarou wasn't just looking at Yurika, but all of the girls of room 106. Since moving Crimson would be dangerous, Koutarou and the nine girls plus the Rainbow Heart transfer team would be escorting her. None of the girls had their usual cheerful demeanor because they knew this was a big part of the upcoming battle.

“Koutarou is worried about us?”

Having realized Koutarou's feelings, Sanae-chan smiled. She happily flew around Koutarou. Sanae-san was happy too of course, but her display of emotions were different from Sanae-chan's, as she blushed slightly instead.

“I'm not worried. Everyone's strong after all”

”Then, you don't like us fighting?”

“Yeah, that's right”

He no longer had any intentions to hide it. Koutarou loved the sight of the girls shining under daylight. He didn't want to see them dirtied from fighting.

“So the truth is you want to go alone, huh”

”Well, yeah. But... I know that's not possible”

“You don't like that you're weak, do you, Koutarou-san?”

”Yeah, in the end it all comes down to that”

Koutarou said as he smiled wryly towards Sanae-san. It was just like she said. If

Koutarou was strong enough, the girls wouldn't have to fight. However, his strength was given to him from all of the other girls. With his power alone, he couldn't protect anyone, which Koutarou himself didn't like.

“Koutarou, let me tell you something good”

Sanae-chan floated up in front of Koutarou.

“Hm?”

When Koutarou looked up, he saw a huge smile on Sanae-chan's face.

“Playing pretend heroes is fun because it's pretend”

That was Sanae's way of cheering him up. The two Sanae's had different ways of expressing their feelings, but they had one mind.

“A real hero has it hard”

“Playing pretend heroes is fun because you have a home to return to. Kabutonga didn't have a home to return to, right?”

If there were real heroes in this world, their families would get attacked by the enemy. That's why the heroes had to hide their identities or leave their families. Kabutonga, who Sanae gave as an example, had no family. Because he was completely alone, there were no worries of his family getting attacked. The circumstances were about the same as real life special forces.

Koutarou had a home to return to. In it were countless smiles awaiting his return. If Koutarou really obtained the ultimate strength, attacking the owners of those smiles was far easier than attacking Koutarou. However, since Koutarou's identity had already been revealed, he couldn't hide his identity nor was there any meaning in leaving his home. That's why everyone in that home needed to be as strong as Koutarou. And if they were all just as strong, the safest way was to work together to solve their problems right away. In other words, Koutarou couldn't become a hero.

At best, Koutarou could dream of playing pretend hero. Pretend heroes didn't have their homes attacked, and once the sun set they could stop fighting and they were freed from their ties. Of course, a real enemy would not play along with pretend heroes. They'd attack their homes and would continue even after

the sun set.

“... So my wish is playing pretend hero, huh... the two of you are so strict...”

Koutarou smiled wryly at the two. He thought they were right. Koutarou only wanted the convenient parts of being a hero. He didn't want to look at the more inconvenient parts.

“Didn't I say so before? If you leave me behind again I'll put you in a scorpion lock. Take me with you too, out of love...”

“Just like we share happiness, we should share unhappiness too. This isn't a pretend relationship...”

Sanae-chan showed a boastful smile and leaned back. The kind Sanae-san sympathized with Koutarou. Seeing those two, Koutarou felt tension leave his shoulders. Changing gears right away was difficult, but he knew they were right.

“Thanks, you two”

Thanks to the two Sanaes, Koutarou's expression returned to his normal one. Seeing that, the two merged into one and presented their head to Koutarou.

“Then pat me all you want”

When being patted, having only one head was more convenient.

“Okay, okay”

”Spoil me even more”

It was also more convenient when hugging Koutarou. Not satisfied with just having her head patted, Sanae wrapped her arms around Koutarou and hugged him.

“... I am always in your debt, lady Sanae”

“I'm changing over to my other self, so be even more intense!”

”Okay, okay”

“... U-uhm, I'm sorry, Koutarou-san...”

”It's fine”

Koutarou hugged Sanae with one hand and patted her head with his other. As

he did, he thought Sanae might be feeling a little anxious too.

Part 2

It was only reasonable that Sanae would feel anxious. Not because Yurika was in charge, but because moving Crimson was dangerous. Moving from the safe house in Kitsushouharukaze city to the passage leading to Folsaria was no problem as they'd just use the Blue Knight, but the problem was from there on. They would go to somewhere they had never been before, and there was a chance they'd get attacked by the enemy. Even if they were told about the magical kingdom of Folsaria beforehand, they were still uneasy. The anxiety regarding Yurika was nothing compared to this.

“Bertorion, there doesn't seem to be any disconnect here”

”Which means that the passage really leads to a different world, huh”

”So it would seem. Really, anything goes with magic, doesn't it...”

The passage leading to the magical kingdom of Folsaria was placed in the suburbs of Kitsushouharukaze city where the population was less. This was a permanent passage made from powerful magic, and as long as permission was granted, one could travel back and forth between Folsaria and Kitsushouharukaze city. Because permanent passages like these were often targeted for their strategic value, both Rainbow Heart and Darkness Rainbow tended to set them up in places out of the public eye.

This passage lead to a different world where Folsaria was, but the passage worked similarly to the gate Theia and the others used to travel between the Blue Knight and room 106. However, there was one different point between this and the transportation gate. That was that the destination could be seen through the passage. Moving through the Blue Knight's transfer gate was done by walking through a glowing wall, but magical passage was like walking through a normal passage. The entrance and exit were connected through magic. As a

result the other side could be seen, and a cable could be pulled through the passage. The transfer gate Forthorthe used couldn't do this much. It was only logical that Clan would be amazed.

“By the way, Clan-san, why are you drawing a wire?”

Shizuka looked at Clan working and tilted her head in confusion. She couldn't understand why Clan would do that since she used wireless for everything.

“Radio waves or gravitational waves won't reach all the way to another world, so I'm pulling a cable to create a relay station on the Folsaria side”

Clan said as she showed off a metallic box. This was a homemade relay device with cables and gears peaking out, that would be set up in Folsaria with a cable drawn to a relay in Kitsushouharukaze city to allow for communication and transportation.

“Ah, cellphones have something like that too. The things you leave where its hard to get signal, like underground”

“Yes, that's right”

Fortunately, Shizuka knew of something similar, so she could understand its meaning. She then began helping Clan.

“Then I only need to connect this box with this cable right?”

“Please do, Shizuka”

“Okay”

Clan was setting up a relay station because of the chances that they would be attacked. In other words, because she was feeling uneasy. Sanae wasn't the only one feeling uneasy... of course the other girls felt the same.

“If this place is attacked, Theia-dono and the others will lose their strong point. Work together with the people from Rainbow Heart and protect this place. If it seems difficult, contact me”

“Understood, Kiriha-sama! We will protect this place with our lives”

“I'm counting on you”

Kiriha had brought her own subordinates with her. Their mission was to

protect this passage and relay station. If they failed, they would lose Theia's and the others unlimited offensive power. In preparation of that risk, they were bringing equipment and weapons over to the Folsaria side, but they wouldn't be able to use their usual flashy attacks. Protecting this place was a vital mission.

On top of that, Kiriha had left troops in room 106 as well. Rainbow Heart's magical girls stationed in other regions also converged with these troops and there was no fear of room 106 being lost in an instant.

“... By the way, Maki-san, will you really be alright going to Rainbow Heart's base?”

Harumi was worried about something different. She was worried about Maki's safety, as she had been a former member of Darkness Rainbow. Won't she be caught if she went with them to Folsaria. It was only natural she worried about that. Because of that, Harumi whispered to Maki so that the Rainbow Heart members around couldn't hear.

“... I will be okay. It seems like the negotiations went well. Besides, I'm wearing this collar. Thank you for worrying about me, Sakuraba-san”

Maki smiled and whispered back to Harumi.

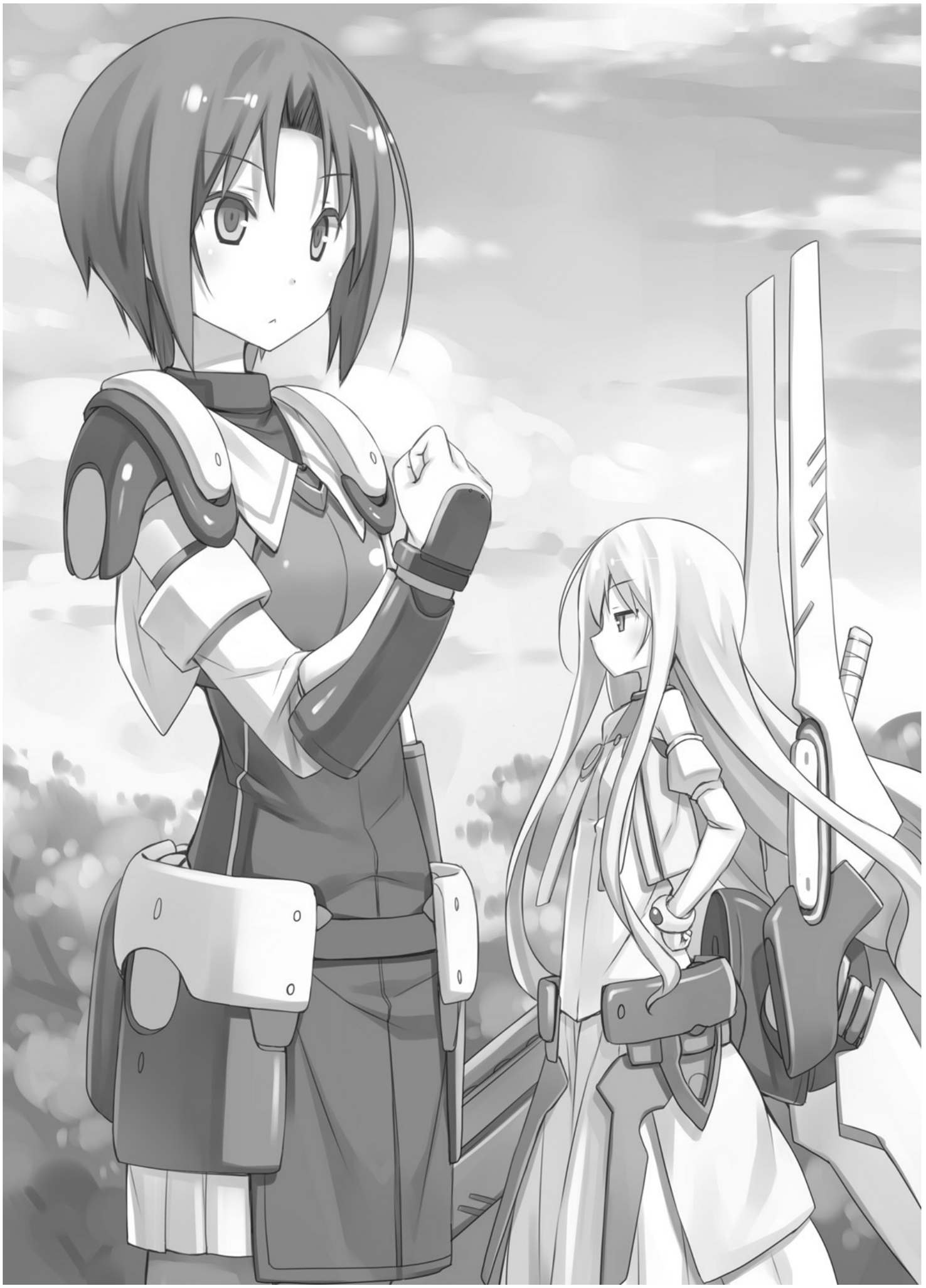
“I'm glad...”

Hearing that, Harumi seemed to be relieved.

The truth was that they had already come to terms with the upper echelon of Rainbow Heart. While it was true that Maki had been part of Darkness Rainbow, in exchange for working together with Rainbow Heart, she would receive immunity. They were after Maki's talent and information. On top of that, the fake collar also made the upper echelon feel at ease. Koutarou and the others knew that there was no way Maki would betray them, but they needed a guarantee for others to believe it. That guarantee was the collar that was supposed to restrain her freedom. Currently, Maki was officially being considered Yurika's captive. As long as she continued to cooperate, her freedom was guaranteed. However, on site, her being Dark Navy might affect morale, so it was being concealed. As a result, there was no one in Rainbow Heart that felt hostility towards Maki. If anything, Theia and Kiriha were being suspected far more.

“Your Highness, it's about time”

”Hm, men, are you prepared?”



Hearing Ruth's report, Theia stood up and looked around. She was already

wearing her Combat Dress. However, she wasn't wearing her usual heavy firepower Assault Red. There was a chance that the cable for the relay station could be cut so she was wearing a different accessory, the Command Green.

As the name suggests, Command Green was used for commanding. It enhanced functions that had an impact on command, such as information gathering. In exchange, it was equipped with weapons that consumed less energy or bullets. Taking the chance of the cable being cut off into consideration, this was the optimal equipment. Theia wouldn't underestimate her foes.

“It seems everyone is ready”

Ruth confirmed that everyone was ready and changed the system mode of her own armor from standby mode to cruise mode. Ruth was wearing an armor designed for combat. Just like with Koutarou's armor, it enhanced her strength, but it was more focused on its defensive properties, on top of that, it made it easier for her to control her automatic weaponry. In other words, this was an armor made on the assumption that Ruth's movements would dull when controlling the automatic weapons. Her fighting style was based on controlling several automatic weapons equipped with beam swords.

“Good, then Yurika, your briefing before we leave”

“Yes”

Yurika moved to the front of the group on Theia's request. On top of Koutarou and the others, there were also Rainbow Heart and People of the Earth here. In total there were a couple of dozen people gathered. Without flinching from being stared at by so many, she boldly stood in front of everyone.

“Our mission today is to transfer the Darkness Rainbow leader, Dark Crimson, to Rainbow Heart's base in Folsaria”

Her voice was steady, and she didn't show any hint of her usual timid personality. As a result, even though she was wearing her usual magical girl outfit, she gave off a completely different impression. An arc-wizard of Rainbow Heart was without a doubt standing there.

“However, don't think this is just a normal transportation. The success or failure of this mission will affect the outcome of our future battle. Do not

underestimate this mission”

Yurika continued her briefing. She looked like someone worthy of being in charge of many lives. However, as Koutarou watched her he couldn't help but feel impatient.

Many lives are at stake, so this is fine. But this... this doesn't suit Yurika...

Considering the importance of the mission, Yurika keeping it together was a good thing. But the girl known as Nijino Yurika's personality was completely unsuitable for fighting. She was only acting like she was right now because she had to. If anything, she was forcing herself. That's why Koutarou wanted to be of help to her and pull her out of the situation she was in as quickly as possible. As a result Koutarou was getting motivated, so in effect Yurika's briefing gave everyone motivation.

“... Expect all kinds of problems and difficulties. But don't let your guard down, even in the very end. Don't give up when faced with difficulties. Work together with your allies and complete your mission please... Then let's begin the mission! Good luck everyone!”

Once Yurika's briefing ended everyone began moving at the same time. Everyone understood their own role. If they wanted to protect the lives of many, now was the time to act.

Part 3

Folsaria's sky was a little greener than Kitsushouharukaze city's was, the atmosphere was different and there were also all kinds of plants that the group had never seen before. As a result, Koutarou and the others really felt like this was a different world from the moment they set foot on the ground.

“So this is the magical kingdom of Folsaria”

Koutarou looked around his vicinity. Around him was a dense forest, and Koutarou was standing in front of a stone building that had been built in a glade.

This building was the exit of the passage leading to Folsaria.

What is this? I feel like I've seen this building before...

To most people, this building was just as unfamiliar as their surroundings. But Koutarou felt a sense of déjà vu instead and tilted his head. He'd never been to Folsaria before, but he felt like he had seen something similar before.

”This is interesting, Blue Knight”

”What is?”

But before he could scan his memory, Alunaya who resided within Shizuka, called out to him and Koutarou's attention drifted from his own thoughts. In the end he decided to forget about it, assuming he had seen something like it in a movie or something.

”Magical power is far more concentrated here than on Earth”

”Then does that mean my weight—!?”

”It's currently rapidly decreasing”

“Alright!!”

Not only was there a difference in sight and atmosphere, but the magical power here was far more condensed. The natural magical power that existed in this world was abundant and magicians could recover their magical power faster than in Kitsushouharukaze city. As a result, Alunaya was rapidly recovering the magical power he had spent during the battle the other day. At this rate, it wouldn't even take a day before Shizuka returned to her ideal weight.

“Then can you use some amazing spell?”

Koutarou imagined Alunaya's plasma breath becoming even more powerful. It would be such an overwhelming force that it could probably evaporate anything.

”No, the potency of my magic won't change. Just like how a person can't drink more water just because there's a lake next to him”

“I see...”

”Of course, since I don't need to hold back, the power might go up a little bit”

But sadly, the power of Alunaya's magic wouldn't change. The amount of

magical power that could be manipulated depended on the skill of the magician, and that didn't change between here and Earth. Of course, his fire power would increase in the sense that he could waste more magical power and fire repeatedly, but that didn't mean the very potency itself would increase.

“What's important is that my weight is returning to normal!! Ahh, if I had known I would have come to this place sooner!!”

Shizuka was currently weighing in at 98 kilos. She wanted to return to weighing around 40, so Yurika was rejoiced with this situation.

“But... the denseness of this magical power is directly connected with people wanting to freely use magic”

Contrary to the rejoicing Shizuka, Maki was a little sad. Because magical power recovered so quickly here, magic could be used more often in Folsaria than on Earth. As a result, the amount of spells a single magician could cast increased exponentially. And that was the start of this tragedy.

Hearing Maki's words, Crimson who was restrained by handcuffs and rope laughed. All she could do in her current situation was laugh and talk.

“Even if you say that, this small country would have fallen into ruins without magic. We can't live without using magic”

The ground in Folsaria wasn't very fertile, so the people had to rely on magic to survive. Because of that, position and income was influenced by the strength of one's magic. There was a large social gap between someone who could use magic and someone who couldn't. Because of that, it would of course cause the rise of people who misused magic. In other words, the abundant magical power and severe environment gave birth to Darkness Rainbow.

“It doesn't have to be like that now. The time to discard the too strong power is coming”

”Rainbow, I'm surprised you can say something like that when you can manipulate so much magic”

Crimson opposed Yurika's words, but she obediently entered the vehicle prepared for them in front of the building. She knew that it was pointless opposing with more than just words.

Part 4

The use of the car was widespread in the magical kingdom of Forthorthe. This was their own car which Folsaria had made using the cars on Earth as reference. Since Folsaria was pretty inferior in terms of technology when compared to Earth, many of the functions relied on magic in order to make the car move. The engine used magic, and magical power was its fuel. Magic had to be used to make for it because rare earth metals couldn't be found in Folsaria,

As a result, Folsaria's cars were on the same level as the cars on Earth were several decades ago. On the other hand, it had its own merits. It didn't exhaust carbon dioxide, it was pollution free and the engine was quiet... they were cars that didn't have a negative impact on the environment.

Koutarou and the others got into those mysterious cars and headed towards the capital of the magical kingdom of Folsaria, Thorthe. Koutarou and the others split up into three cars. Shizuka with the highest survival ability, Sanae with her ability to detect danger and Clan were in the front car. In the second car was Crimson, Maki who had known Crimson for a long time, Theia who could forcibly keep Crimson restrained and the quick witted Kiriha. The remaining four were in the last car, being Koutarou and Harumi who worked effectively together, Ruth who was in charge of information and the commander, Yurika. It was a good balance to respond to various situations.

“It looks like we'll safely be able to reach the city”

Harumi showed a smile of relief when she could see the city through the windshield. They had already completed most of their travel and were almost at their destination. They were already too close to the city for Darkness Rainbow to launch an attack.

“It's probably thanks to Kiriha-san”

Koutarou smiled back at Harumi. The truth was that Kiriha had taken measures against Dark Green's future forecast. That measure was preparing several routes, and a die. Just as they were about to leave, Kiriha rolled the die and

chose the route. As a result, the route used to move Crimson became a matter of probability, and because it was made just before they departed, they couldn't rely on the forecast to launch an ambush.

In this situation the best way for Darkness Rainbow to ambush was to set up in a favorable geographic area and wait. With the possibility of each route being chosen being equal, waiting in ambush was the highest chance to reclaim Crimson. Of course, that is if Darkness Rainbow was aiming to recapture Crimson.

“... We can't let our guard down yet. The place where the chances are 50/50 is just up ahead”

Unlike Koutarou and Harumi, Yurika's expression was still stiff. As they approached the city, the routes began merging, and in the end they ended in either the northern or southern gate. Rainbow Heart's base was nearby, so attacking Koutarou and the others this close to the city was incredibly dangerous, but considering Darkness Rainbow's ability, they couldn't disregard that possibility.

“You're right, sorry Yurika”

“I'm sorry, Yurika-san”

“No...”

Yurika wasn't blaming Koutarou and Harumi, and turned to look out the window of the car. What was important right now, was if Darkness Rainbow were outside or not.

If Yurika is being this cautious, Dark Green might avoid attacking... but if I tell Yurika that the chances of them attacking instead might increase... future forecasts really are a pain...

Koutarou thought to himself as he looked outside the window as well. The car was just about approaching the urban area.

“...Clan, can you hear me?”

”What is it, Theiamillis-san?”

That was when Clan and Theia began speaking through their bracelets. Since

the tone was calm, Koutarou listened in without a worry.

“Could you take a look outside the car?”

”Outside...? Why?”

“Well... I was just thinking that the cityscape looked similar to Forthorthe”

“To Forthorthe?”

Clan was operating the unmanned scout flying in the air but interested in Theia's words, she looked up. Outside was Folsaria's capital, Thorthe.

“...You're right. But more accurately, it resembles the ruins from over 1000 years ago”

“So you think so too?”

”Yes. What an interesting coincidence”

The topic interested Koutarou.

Ruins from over a thousand years ago?

Since they only just entered the urban area, Koutarou hadn't noticed, but after listening to the two he turned his attention towards the buildings, and when he did, they did indeed feel similar to buildings in Forthorthe. And it wasn't the Forthorthe 20 years into the past, but the Forthorthe 2000 years into the past.

I see, so that's why I felt like I had seen it before...

This was the reason for the déjà vu that Koutarou had felt at the exit to Folsaria. The architecture was similar to Forthorthe's, so that's why he felt like he had seen it before.

“By the way, there are similar cities to this on Earth too”

”Kii, in similar climates and environments, there are typical designs that will appear”

”I'd like more originality in alien civilizations... how regrettable”

However, Koutarou and the others thought of this as nothing more than a coincidence. They didn't look that similar, and besides, the group had other things to think about right now. They still weren't done moving Crimson.

Part 5

In the end, the attack Yurika was on the lookout for never happened. Koutarou and the others safely reached Rainbow Heart's base without any incident.

Rainbow Heart had a total of eight bases within the capital of Thorthe. They spread out in a way to protect the capital. There were seven bases, like the seven colors, in a circle around the city, and the headquarters was in the center of the capital, next to the palace. This formation was based on Rainbow Heart's motto, the center of the rainbow.

Koutarou and the others moved Crimson to one of the outer seven bases, the Blue Tower. They couldn't leave a terrorist like Crimson right next to the palace, and so she would be placed in one of the outer bases.

This Blue Tower was the base for the Blue Magic Division, and Yurika was the highest ranking member of it. Apart from the base commander, there was no one on this base that Yurika couldn't order around. As a result, when Yurika entered the base, people saluted her one after another. In the past she had felt embarrassed by that, but she showed no signs of that now. Her strong sense of purpose made her forget about it. Upon entering the tower's entrance hall, Yurika was greeted by an old woman. She walked up to the old woman and saluted. This was someone that Yurika had to salute.

“Kaera-sama, Nijino Yurika has returned from the Dark Crimson transfer mission”

“Good work, Rainbow”

The old woman returned Yurika's salute and nodded. This old woman named Kaera was the base commander. The base commander was also a civil officer, and had a position similar to an elder. There were as many elders as there were bases, and together they held the elder meetings. They were the supreme decision-making body in Folsaria. That's why she was one of the outstanding VIPs in Folsaria.

“Well done on completing your mission”

”It wasn't just my strength alone. It was thanks to my friends and the soldiers”

Yurika loved Kaera. She always had a kind smile on her face and guided Yurika on a proper path. That's why Yurika adored her like her grandmother.

“You have some good companions”

“Yes! ...But Kaera-sama, we will have to talk later. I still haven't fully completed my mission”

“Ah, right. I apologize for getting in your way”

”Once my mission is over I will return to make my report”

”I will be waiting”

Yurika loved Kaera, but she was unfortunately not in a situation where she could chat with her yet. She still had to deliver Crimson to her cell. So Yurika saluted once more and turned her back on her, heading towards the entrance hall's exit.

“Looking at the results, it seems Nana's decision was correct...”

Kaera muttered to herself as she looked at Yurika taking Crimson away. When Nana had nominated Yurika as her successor Kaera had objected. No matter how she looked at it, Yurika wasn't the type of girl to fight. But this was the result. Yurika stood at the front of many companions, and splendidly carried out her mission. Seeing this unexpected result, Kaera felt like this was the coming of a new age.

“And that is the Blue Knight...”

Next, Kaera's eyes stopped on Koutarou who was walking next to Yurika. She had already received a report on Koutarou and the others. Ever since she had received that report, Kaera had always been interested in Koutarou. Koutarou's appearance and fighting style was very similar to the Arbiter that appeared in the legends made known only to the elders.

“...I don't believe that he is the Arbiter, but... a very similar knight has appeared before the decisive battle against Darkness Rainbow... surely this is fate...”

Kaera felt fate as she stared at Koutarou walking next to Yurika. In the legends, there was a magician alongside the Arbiter as well. Kaera prayed that this fate became reality. Because it wouldn't just save Folsaria, but the lives of many more.

Raid

Part 1

Sunday, September 19

Darkness Rainbow leaving Crimson behind as a decoy in the battle the other day was their last resort. Since they prioritized the individual's desire, nobody would sacrifice themselves for the sake of their allies. In other words, no matter how much Crimson loved fighting, she was more suited for being a decoy with her injuries. But she wouldn't act as a decoy without any insurance. The plan had been that Crimson would act as a decoy and then be rescued. While there was a risk, Darkness Rainbow had no choice but to save Crimson. The one in charge of the rescue operation was Dark Green.

Just hang in there a little longer, Crimson...

In Dark Green's case, she would probably save Crimson even if she didn't have to. Green probably wouldn't admit it, but she thought of Crimson as more than just an ally in Darkness Rainbow. Possibly because they had spent so much time together, Green had started feeling something like friendship towards Crimson. Thanks to that, Green was in high morale. She felt a strong sense of duty as she thought that she had to save Crimson no matter what. In the future she had seen, Crimson was indispensable.

“As expected, the chances of being able to rescue her is higher after she's been moved”

Green looked at the Blue Tower where Crimson was being held from an elevated position in the suburbs. From there she used several spells to gather information. And using that gathered information she was coming up with the

most reliable rescue plan.

At first there were three different plans to rescue Crimson. Those were before she was being moved, during, and after. Trusting her own ability, Green chose the last option, to rescue Crimson after she had been moved. Before the move, Rainbow Heart was moving erratically, making the future difficult to forecast, during the transfer, Green's own actions distorted the future. As a result, her forecasts were most accurate after the move had been complete.

“...Crimson is definitely being held around that area...”

As Green expected, she was steadily gathering information. Crimson was being held in a room that didn't accept magic, but while normal magic couldn't see into the room, future forecast was special. There were several cells that could contain magicians in the tower, and Green's forecast were split between the top of the tower and underground, but considering the flow of people, the chances were higher that she was being held at the top. Moreover, the spiritual energy sensor that she had brought with her from the underground picked up a weak reaction to Crimson's aura from the very top. The accuracy of each was at 60% or so, but the chance of both being wrong was below 15%. That's why Green determined that Crimson was being held in the top of the tower.

“The past us would have had a hard time succeeding with this rescue, but... we're different now”

Green operated the computer on her arm and gave orders to the weapons group she had left nearby. This weapons group had been brought to her by the People of the Earth and Elexis, so they didn't exude any magical power at all. She also had concealed fighters that flew in the air without making a sound. Combined with her diversion spells, it wouldn't be hard to get through Rainbow Heart's surveillance network.

“Just wait Crimson. I'm coming to save you right now!”

Dark Green had a grim past where she had lost someone precious because of her inability to see the future. That's why her desire to save Crimson with her forecasts was so strong. She didn't want to repeat the same mistake again.

Part 2

To Yurika, battles weren't something she started, but just sort of fell into. She would then desperately fend off the attack and return to her usual life. She had always been repeating that and because of that, her determination to start a battle was heavy. One could say that she had been cornered to that point. While she was determined to battle it wasn't that this was something she wanted, so she would sometimes show hesitation. Now was one of those times.

“....”

Yurika was eating dinner within the Blue Tower. However, she wasn't moving her hand or mouth. She simply stared into her bowl while holding her spoon. She seemed to be looking past the bowl of soup and was looking at some faraway place.

“Yurika, aren't you going to eat?”

”Satomi-san...?”

Because she was like that, Yurika didn't notice Koutarou until he called out to her. When Yurika looked up, she saw Koutarou sitting on the other end of the table, eating dinner.

“Are you nervous?”

“Y-Yes... I'm so worried about the future...”

Yurika wasn't moving out of nervousness and worry for the future. While Yurika had matured, this was the first time she had moved ahead with a battle she had initiated. For the first time in her life, each and every one of her decisions would affect the lives of many people. Up until now her hand had always been forced as the enemy appeared, or cooperated with someone else in a battle, so she only had to focus on the thing in front of her. But now she had to create situations like that herself. Hesitation and pressure seized control of Yurika.

“I thought so”

”You noticed?”

“Yeah. That's only normal for a commander on their first campaign”

Koutarou dropped his shoulders and smiled wryly at Yurika's question. Because Koutarou had been running around the battlefield in the past Forthorthe, Yurika's reaction was familiar to him.

“If you make the wrong decision, many people will die. And that's why you're frozen. Everyone feels the same way before a big battle. Other than those who don't value the lives of others”

Maxfern, Dextro or Tayuma probably wouldn't care, however a normal commander would. Your allies possibly dying from a miss in judgment was something anyone would fear. Even more so on your first campaign.

“You too, Satomi-san?”

“Yeah, I was scared too. Everyone were such good people. They were earnest to protect their country... and they might die with just a word from me. So I understand how you feel”

Koutarou used the legends as reference as he acted, but those were without a doubt his own decisions. There were successes and failures. There were many battles he wanted to redo if he had the chance.

“What should I do?”

”Don't try to do anything special”

”Something special?”

“For example... like trying to do everything yourself. It's a mistake people tend to do”

Since your allies were in danger, you should be the first to jump into danger, at first glance this looked like the correct decision, but it wasn't. The situation would change as time passes, that's why always standing on the frontlines yourself was strange. But if you didn't accept that out of guilt, the entire plan would be distorted. The results of that need not be said.

“Just trust in your allies and do what you always do. That's the best”

If you tried to do something you weren't used to, those around you would hesitate as well. Acting like normal would be the most natural way to carry out any plan. While that sounded obvious, one tended to forget when the lives of many were at stake. Koutarou thought that battles really are difficult.

“... If I was the strongest magical girl in history, nobody would have to fight...”

Listening to Koutarou, Yurika stared at the palm of her hand. If the power in that hand was strong enough to pierce the heavens, Yurika could have fought against all of the enemies alone. But because she couldn't, all of her allies would have to expose themselves to danger. Yurika felt really bitter about her helplessness.

“You're right. I think the same thing every day. If I was an invincible hero, you or the others would never have to fight again”

“Satomi-san...”

Koutarou smiled wryly again. He strongly agreed with Yurika's opinion. Yurika looked at Koutarou with surprise. She had convinced herself that Koutarou didn't have any worries like that.

“But... when I said that, Sanae told me something interesting”

Koutarou's smile changed type. The kindness in it grew more obvious.

“Sanae-chan did?”

”Heroes are fun because they are play pretend, a real hero has it hard”

“It's fun... because it's play pretend...?”

“Just think about it a little. If you were the strongest magical girl in history, what would have happened since the day we met and onwards?”

”If I really was the strongest in history...”

Yurika reimagined her everyday life with Koutarou and the others with her being the strongest. She probably wouldn't have flown through the window when she first arrived. She also would have stopped the first incident without anyone noticing. She would have won the obstacle marathon alone, Sanae wouldn't have been kidnapped by the ghost hunters, and she probably would have noticed Clan's attack ahead of time and prevented it. At first glance, those

seemed like a wonderful everyday life with nobody being exposed to danger. But—

“... I would have been able to solve all of the incidents on my own, but... I would probably still be alone...”

History's strongest Yurika would have been alone. Because every incident would be resolved before they came to light, Koutarou and the others would never get any opportunities to understand each other. But even before that, she might have thrown Koutarou and the others out of room 106 because it was dangerous.

“That's right. Because you're imperfect, we obtained the time to understand each other and we began to treasure each other. I'm sure the strongest in history version of you wouldn't feel this strongly about us”

”So I began treasuring everyone because I was weak”

“It's not just you. Everyone was”

”Everyone too... that might be true”

Convinced, Yurika nodded her head.

“And if you suddenly became the strongest in history, the enemy wouldn't fight you directly, but go after us or the people in the city. They wouldn't be foolish enough to fight against the strongest”

”That's why it's play pretend heroes... I was only looking at the convenient parts of being the strongest in history...”

The strongest in history would be all alone. Because they were imperfect they could form bonds. It would be impossible to form many bonds as the strongest in history. In the current situation where her identity was known, if Yurika suddenly were to become the strongest, the enemy wouldn't fight her. They would target others to lower the risk of defeat. Reality wouldn't work out like pretend heroes.

“Yurika, what do you think we should do?”

”Uhm... grow strong with everyone and work together?”

In the end, Yurika reached the same conclusion as Koutarou. It didn't matter if

someone did something heroic from time to time. But truly becoming a hero would lead to all kinds of unhappiness. Yurika didn't want that, so she reached the conclusion that everyone should be equally strong. A gathering of strong people with no heroes. Yurika believed that would be the safest way.

“I think so too”

“Ah...”

When Koutarou agreed, Yurika felt relief and her expression eased up a little. Koutarou told her how he felt.

“That's why you should believe in us. Nobody expects perfection from you. We accept that we're imperfect and desperately work together”

Sanae would put him in a scorpion lock if he left her behind again. Harumi vowed to walk alongside Koutarou. Kiriha forgave Koutarou's weakness. Theia and Ruth declared that they would make Koutarou happy, even if they had to use force. Maki prayed that Koutarou would have a happy life. When Koutarou had grieved his lack of power, Shizuka had told him that wasn't true. Clan had worried about her imperfection alongside Koutarou in the past world.

Everyone tried to hold hands. If one looked at it from the other side, it meant that they were denied perfection. Those who were perfect didn't need others. They had the power to do anything and they didn't feel loneliness. Like an omniscient god, they would continue existing on their own. However the girls and Koutarou didn't want that. Rather than being perfect on their own, they would rather hold hands as a group of imperfect people.

“Satomi-san...”

Desperately working together and holding hands seemed just right to Yurika. She felt like Koutarou and the others desired that, and she did as well.

“You're right, it's pretty hard... but I'll try to think that way”

Even though she knew that being imperfect and normal was correct, it was hard to get rid of that heroic desire. But Yurika began wishing that she would eventually feel that way.

“You're fine that way. I'm desperately telling myself that too”

”Ahaha”

Yurika's expression finally returned to a smile and she wiped away the tears that had started forming in the corners of her eyes.

“Thank you very much, Satomi-san. I feel a little better”

She was allowed to rely on her allies. She could rely on Koutarou and the others, and the soldiers too. Everyone was imperfect, but they would give their all to fight. Heroes weren't needed, or maybe everyone were heroes. It didn't matter. Having finally reached her answer, Yurika felt some relief.

“So eat. Nothing will start on an empty stomach”

Seeing Yurika's smile, Koutarou felt relief as well.

“Yes!”

Yurika began eating again. Strangely enough, while she had barely been able to get the food down, she was now able to eat normally. Yurika began thinking that this was what it meant to not be alone as she ate.

“Hey, Satomi-san”

”Hm?”

“Could you eat the green peppers?”

”Eat it yourself”

”I'm imperfect so you have to help me!”

A thud rang out.

“Just shut up and eat!”

“Oka~y, uuuhh, I'm sorry for saying something stupid”

Getting hit hurt. But the strongest in history Yurika probably wouldn't get to have Koutarou hit her. That's why Yurika was happy that she was allowed this.

After eating for a while, things Yurika disliked began piling up on the plate. However, Yurika continued to push away the things she disliked with her fork and focused on the things she liked. She would leave the inconvenient food for later. Something that would resolve it might happen sooner or later. This was

Yurika's usual way of thinking.

This starts happening as soon as she cheers up!

Koutarou began thinking of punishments for Yurika, but before he could get into action, it began.

BOOM

“Kyaaa!?”

”W-What!?”

That was a roaring sound and quake that shook the entire Blue Tower. It was like an intense lightning bolt and earthquake had struck the tower at the same time. Tables and chairs fell over and plates were thrown around. However, the sound and shake only struck once, so Koutarou supported himself on a sturdy stone wall and quickly stood up.

“Yurika, are you okay!?”

”Y-Yes, somehow!”

Koutarou ran over to Yurika and pulled her up on her feet. Yurika's head was covered in green peppers, carrots and celery, but she didn't seem to be hurt.

“But still, just what is— Ah!?”

Yurika had hit her waist and seemed to be in pain, but her expression sharpened after she stood up. She had a hunch of what had caused the roaring sound and quake.

“Let's go, Yurika!”

”Yes!”

The atmosphere around Koutarou had flipped as well. They were no longer two classmates that got along. When they sprinted upstairs, they had the faces of a knight who had gone through countless battles, and one of the magical kingdom of Folsaria's arc-wizards.

Part 3

The explosion in question had happened just outside the Blue Tower. The cause of it was the guided missile that Dark Green had gotten from Elexis. The warhead which had been designed to concentrate the explosion forwards easily punched through the magic barrier and the outer stone wall. Crimson could be seen from the hole in the wall.

“*cough cough* G-Green”

“Crimson! I'm glad you're okay!”

Crimson was having a coughing fit from the dust caused by the explosion, but didn't seem to be hurt. Seeing her like that, Green instinctively started tearing up. She was the only one who deeply regretted not being able to bring Crimson home during the last battle.

“Do- *cough* don't give me that, *cough cough* who would do that? Firing a missile *cough* into the room your ally is being held in. W-What would you do if I died?”

Crimson had begun tearing up as well. However, this was because the dust had gotten into her eyes and she had a hard time breathing, not because of her reunion with Green. Though it wasn't like she wasn't happy.

“It's fine, I made sure of it with my future forecast”

”By the way, what was the chance of success?”

“There was a 95% chance of success”

”Then there was a 5% chance that I would be hurt!?”

”No, there was a 15% chance that you would be hurt”

”... Then there was a 5% chance I would die...”

Green had used her future forecast to search for Crimson's position and then fired the missile from the distance furthest away. Of course, a forecast is a forecast, there was still a chance that Crimson would be in a different place. In the case that Green attempted this way of rescuing, there was an 80% chance of Crimson being unharmed, a 15% chance that she would be be injured. Combined it was a 95% chance of success. The remaining 5% were Crimson dying, which would of course be a failure. Green had fired the missile, well aware of the risk. It

was only natural for Crimson to be fed up.

“Wasn't there a better way!?”

“There was... but this had the highest chance of success”

“... I'm interested, but you don't have to say anything”

”I don't want to remember them so thank you”

“It was that bad!?”

Green had thought up of several other ways of rescuing Crimson, and out of those plans, shooting the cell with a missile had the highest chance of success. Rather than Green being aware of the risk, this had the smallest risk involved.

“Wait, Crimson. The enemy is coming”

Green's future forecast which she had been maintaining for a while now told her that the enemy was coming. The most likely future was Yurika and Koutarou breaking through the door in 30 seconds.

“... You'll be telling me the details when we get back”

”Of course. But for that we'll have to escape first”

”And my cane?”

“I've brought a spare”

Green said and tossed the cane over to Crimson. Dark Yellow had made this cane a while back. During their preparations for the decisive battle with Rainbow Heart, Dark Yellow had been in charge of creating magical weapons, and this cane was one of those. Since this wasn't a personalized cane, it had a rough make and there was a limit to how much magical power could be infused into it, but it was much better than nothing. During the fierce fighting, it would be an easy but fatal mistake to lose your cane, so this was a useful and suitable preparation.

“Crimson, make yourself lighter and get on”

“Got it... Weight Saving”

Green was riding on top of a flying automated weapon and had flown up to the cell on the top floor. By escaping on a scientific weapon, the amount of magic

they would use on their escape would be reduced, making it harder to follow their trail through magic.

Part 4

After making sure that Crimson and Green had left, Koutarou and Yurika entered the cell.

“It looks like it went well”

”No, we can't be sure yet”

The truth was that they could have burst into the cell before Crimson and Green left. But they chose not to... that was part of their plan.

Yurika had decided to attack Darkness Rainbow's base, but there was still one big problem. And that was that she didn't know where it was. In order to find out, Kiriha suggested that they used the captured Crimson.

Kiriha's intuition was that Darkness Rainbow wouldn't just abandon a magician on Crimson's level. However, a rescue operation might be costly, so it wouldn't take place unless the success was past a certain percentage. Koutarou and the others didn't know that Darkness Rainbow had made a deal with Crimson that she would be rescued after being used as a decoy, so in order to induce a rescue operation they purposefully created an opening.

After the battle the other day, Crimson had been held in a safe house that Rainbow Heart had prepared in Kitsushouharukaze city. It would be easy to attack with a large enough force, but the problem was that Darkness Rainbow didn't know of its location. Koutarou and the others didn't have the time to allow for Darkness Rainbow to find the safe house. That said, leaking information was too obvious. So what Kiriha thought up of was having Crimson moved.

First they would create an easier to understand opening in the form of moving Crimson. If they weren't attacked then either, they would at least let Darkness Rainbow know that Crimson was being held in the Blue Tower. Kiriha's plan was

to allow Darkness Rainbow to rescue Crimson and then follow them.

Everything went according to plan and Green attacked their opening and rescued Crimson. All that was left now was follow after them and discover the location of the base.

“Fufufu, it's finally time for Sanae-chan to shine!”

”It's our turn Ho-!”

”We'll show them the power of friendship Ho-!”

It was Sanae and the haniwas job to follow Crimson's and Green's trail. Sanae's ability to see auras would be enhanced through the haniwas spiritual energy technology. This greatly improved her ability and made it possible for her to follow after Crimson and Green despite them concealing their trail.

“Koutarou, I'm leaving her behind so follow after me. Let's go, Karama-chan, Korama-chan!”

“Leave it to us Ho-!”

”Ane-san, we're off Ho-!”

The excited Sanae left Sanae-san behind as Sanae-chan left her body and exited the hole in the wall. The haniwas followed suit, not going to give up their time in the spotlight. The three were far away before Koutarou and the others could say anything.

“I'm kinda... sorry”

The left behind Sanae-san blushed and apologized. Sanae-chan had most of Sanae's energy and childishness, while Sanae-san had most of Sanae's mature points. She was always the one feeling awkward.

“Don't worry, she's fine that way. So how is it looking on their end, Sanae-san?”

“Uhm... it seems like the enemy's obstruction magic is rather ingenious. Following them on her own would be hard. But thanks to the haniwas she is managing somehow”

”I see. Alright, we should follow after them too!”

Koutarou and the others rushed out of the room in the opposite direction of Sanae and the haniwas, heading down the stairs of the tower. Apart from ghost Sanae and the haniwas that could conceal themselves, Koutarou and the others would stand out if they chased after Crimson and Green in the sky. Chasing after the three from the ground was safer and more certain.

Part 5

The climate of the four seasons in the magical kingdom of Folsaria were similar to that of the higher latitudes in the world, and the temperature was somewhat lower than that of Japan. As a result, the forests consisted of tall conifers and combined with the colder climate, it gave off a wintry impression.

“... The question is if these really are conifer or not”

Koutarou looked at the trees and smiled wryly. The trees in the forest looked like conifer at first glance, but they might just look similar. This was the forest of a different world. Clan was the one to answer Koutarou's doubt.

“I don't believe these are strictly conifers, but very similar trees”

”Why?”

”The physical condition and climate of this are very similar to that of Earth, so it wouldn't be strange for the same evolution to have occurred”

“Is that so?”

“Us Forthorthians and you Earthlings being so similar is all the proof needed”

”Now that you mention it...”

A similar environment would give birth to a similar nature. Even in a narrow case like the environment of Earth, several cases like these had been noted. Mammals and marsupials separated by vast oceans had evolved into similar creatures. Clan's conclusion was that things that had evolved in similar environments and into similar appearances were probably not all that different.

“... The real problem is that we lost sight of Darkness Rainbow because of this

forest

Kiriha joined in the conversation and shrugged. As she said, Crimson and Green had dived into this forest during their escape. As a result, Sanae had lost sight of the two once they entered the forest. Crimson and Green concealed their auras, and their spiritual energy blended in with that of the forests, making it impossible to sense them from afar.

“But it will be okay! A forest won't be enough to deceive our eyes!”

”You can't deceive friendship Ho-!”

”We only need to carefully examine things Ho-!”

However, losing sight of the two only applied when chasing after them from above, there were no problems with carefully advancing from the ground. Sanae had merged back into one, and heightened her abilities. Moreover the haniwas were attached to her head from each side, enhancing her abilities even further. This made pursuing Crimson and Green possible.

“Sanae, how does it look?”

“Uhm, I think we'll catch up to them soon. Their auras are getting thicker, little by little”

”Your Highness, Dark Crimson was injured, so she might be slower than us”

“This is our chance. Let's get close enough so we can catch a glimpse of them”

Theia believed that Crimson and Green had a reason to entered this forest other than to just to escape the eyes of their pursuers. She figured that this forest was part of the escape plan and that some preparations had been left there to aid them in their escape. The difficulty of following their aura was more than enough proof of that.

If things were as Theia suspected, she wanted to get them in view before something happened. If she did, chances were Crimson and Green wouldn't be able to shake off her pursuit. She wanted to hurry so that they could find Darkness Rainbow's base.

Koutarou and the others hurriedly walked through the forest. After a couple of minutes, Shizuka suddenly stopped. She then raised her right hand and pointed

straight forward.

“I see them... they're over there”

“Are you sure?”

Koutarou looked in the direction Shizuka pointed, but sadly he couldn't see anything. It was too far away for any human other than Shizuka.

“Yeah. I can see that poor taste of a mantle”

Shizuka had good sight to begin with, on top of that with the Fire Dragon Emperor's power within her, she could see better than a hawk. Ruth and Clan used their equipment to find Crimson after Shizuka pointed it out.

“I've confirmed it here too. I'm displaying the image”

Ruth gave an order to the computer and showed a hologram in the air. In that hologram a red something could be seen.

“You can't tell very clearly by this... instead try this”

Clan fiddled with her bracelet and replaced with image with an analyzed CG model. What was displayed was a CG model of Dark Crimson wearing a dark red mantle.

“Good work. Don't lose sight of them, Ruth”

”I'll try”

”Pardomshiha, I just found it by analyzing the footage, but there seems to be a specific pattern in the thermal radiation. This might be because of a spell”

”Thank you, Clan-sama!”

Ruth checked the thermal radiation after Clan pointed it out, and there was indeed a pattern. There seemed to be an irregularity because of camouflage or obstruction magic. Ruth inputted that pattern into her computer and began her pursuit in order to not lose sight of Crimson.

An irregularity with Green's camouflage when she's specialized in information type magic...?

However, Maki had her doubts. Dark Green was skilled at future forecast, which was part of information type magic which she specialized in. As such she

was skilled at all types of information type spells. In other words, illusions, obstructions and camouflage were her forte. That's why, while the effect may have been weaker for some reason, but the effect should be stable and without irregularity. Because if that, if there were any irregularities in her information type spells, then— having thought that far, Maki hurriedly warned everyone.

“They're attacking! The Crimson you see over there is showing herself on purpose!”

There was at the very least, some reason for Crimson's appearance being seen. Maki's theory was that Green had purposefully cast an imperfect spell, or Crimson, who was bad at those kinds of spells, was acting on her own. Either way, considering that they were being pursued, it was likely that they would launch an attack here.

Part 6

Maki's warning came out just as Green was about to attack.

She saw through it!? As expected of Navy!! Even though she's brainwashed, the indigo magical girl is still present!!

Green clicked her tongue in her mind, as she carried out her attack on Koutarou and the others. While she had been seen through, she didn't have the choice to not attack once Crimson had been spotted.

“Go, you guys!”

Green's attack was an ambush using the automated weapons group. Green had hidden the weapons in the forest before hand and lured Koutarou and the others into the optimal place to ambush. While they were distracted with Crimson, she would attack. During this time, she had to use her spell to conceal the weapons, and because of that she was some distance away from Crimson acting as decoy. In other words, Maki was pretty much spot on.

“Lots of energy reactions! The enemies are all around us!”

By the time the automated weapons began their attack, Green undid her spell and Koutarou and the others noticed that they were surrounded. Their numbers were over 30 in total. Surprised by the number, Ruth's voice unintentionally trembled.

“Mass Protection!”

The first one to act was surprisingly Yurika. She had begun moving the moment Maki warned them, so her spell was activated right after the automated weapons appeared.

The automated weapons fired off their machine guns with a loud ratatat, but they bounced off of Yurika's defensive spell. With this many enemies however, the barrier would only last for a few seconds. Though those few seconds allowed Koutarou and the others to rally.

“Everyone, focus on protecting yourselves! Don't force yourselves!”

Koutarou attacked the humanoid weapons as he instructed the girls not to force themselves.

The automated weapons were both from Forthorthe and the underground, and on top of that they had also been enhanced with magic. With more than 30 of them, each person had to defeat three each. On their own, they weren't all that dangerous, but they were extremely dangerous when attacking all together. While Koutarou and the others might be thinking of fighting three each, the automated weapons weren't necessarily going to let them.

“Such lavish hospitality, automated weapons and all!”

Theia attacked the automated weapons with the assault rifle equipped on her right arm while complaining. The current Combat Dress she was using was Command Green and it came equipped with an assault rifle, a grenade launcher, standard throwing grenades and a heat knife for close combat. They were weapons focused on versatility. Because of this she had less attack power than with Assault Red and had to aim for weakspots to defeat her enemies. Her accuracy improved with her equipment focused on information gathering, but Theia's personality didn't match up with those kinds of weak attacks. As a result, Theia grew quite frustrated.

“You're wrong, Theiamillis-san! Take a closer look at the enemies!”

”What do you mean!?”

”These enemies are all prototypes and test models, or things that have received emergency repair! They've gathered the ones that can be used as sacrificial pawn!”

The automated weapons that had surprised attack were rich in variety. They were experimental prototypes, made to examine production, or weapons that had been damaged in the previous battle and repaired. These weapons were irregular and difficult to use in a real battle.

In other words, losing these automated weapons wouldn't hurt Darkness Rainbow at all. In fact, losing them to avoid pursuit was the best possible use for them.

“In other words, the enemy is planning to escape during this opening! Hurry, Ruth!”

“Yes, Kiriha-sama!”

Despite the ambush, neither Green nor Crimson were attacking. The enemy consisted of irregulars useful only as sacrificial pawns. Kiriha could read the enemy's intentions from their actions. That was when Crimson who had linked up with Green some distance away let out a proud laugh.

“Bingo! But you're too late!”

Having outsmarted Kiriha after being on the receiving end of her intellect, Crimson was in great mood.

“Crimson, quit playing, let's go!”

But the careful Green scolded Crimson, and left the area with a couple of automated weapons as guards. Playing around would only increase the danger. Green was also happy to have outsmarted Kiriha but she still couldn't let her guard down.

“I know. Geez, you're so strict...”

Crimson hurriedly chased after Green. She was now having conversations she used to have with Maki with Green. Crimson secretly felt disappointment that

her position hadn't improved even after Maki had left.

“Koutarou, should I chase after them!?”

Seeing the two run away, Sanae got really worried, and thought of chasing after them with her astral projection.

“No, protecting yourself takes priority right now! Don't force yourself!”

Koutarou stopped Sanae, worried for her safety. When Sanae-chan astral projected herself, t he left behind Sanae-san's spiritual energy greatly decreased. In this kind of situation when the enemy was all over, reducing her spiritual energy was too risky.

“But...”

”Sanae, you don't have to force yourself to become a hero! There's still something we can do!”

“...Okay”

Sanae wanted to be of use to Koutarou, but in the end she was persuaded and stayed here. Remembering what she had spoken with Koutarou about, Sanae knew that being that told that she didn't need to become a hero was the same as being told she was loved.

“Alright, Love Love Heart, Eternal Beat!”

If she couldn't chase after Crimson and Green, she could at least defeat the enemies near Koutarou. Burning with motivation, Sanae unleashed an explosive amount of spiritual energy. The vast amount of spiritual energy warped the laws of physics and glowed to the point of normal humans being able to see it. She looked like she was wearing a golden glowing robe of feathers.

“Eternal Angelic Shoot!!”

While wasting spiritual energy with her glowing robe, Sanae fired off arrows of light made out of spiritual energy. They flew straight forwards and stuck into the humanoid weapons in front of her. The massive spiritual energy was released and torn the automated weapons asunder. Thanks to her appearance, Sanae looked like a heroine from her one of her beloved anime.

“That girl... Sanae, just who is she?”

“Have you forgotten already Uncle? She's the former ghost who used to live in Corona House”

”I know that, but I can't imagine that's all”

“She really is amazing. To think a normal human could do that much...”

Shizuka smiled wryly as she crushed the automated weapons with her fist. In terms of simple combat prowess, Shizuka was far above Sanae. However, that was because she had the power of the Fire Dragon Emperor within her. Shizuka's own strength was within the human limits of a martial artist. In contrast, Sanae was exceeding the limits of man on her own. It was only obvious that Shizuka and Alunaya would be surprised. And because of that, Alunaya began suspecting that Sanae wasn't just a normal human.

“I'm jealous, her weight doesn't increase either”

”Then let's finish this up quickly”

”You don't have to tell me that. Let's go, Uncle!”

”Understood!”

Shizuka began swinging her fists again. Her appearance when fighting enveloped in flames gave of the feel of power.

“Satomi-kun, I'm casting a spell on the sword!”

“Please do, Sakuraba-senpai!”

Koutarou and Harumi were also working together, though in a different way from Shizuka and Alunaya. Since they were pursuing Crimson and Green, Koutarou had been equipped with Saguratin, as Signaltin was too powerful and would be detected. They were then ambushed, and Koutarou never had the time to call out Signaltin, so he was fighting the weapons with the sword he had in hand. Harumi was supporting Koutarou. While the sword was different, her role was the same.

“Gather, spirits of water! Dance, spirits of wind! Combine these two powers and appear, spirits of lightning! With the wrath of the god of thunder, condemn my enemies!”

No matter how far away they were, Harumi was connected to Signaltin

through the crest on her forehead. That was why she had been able to travel through an endless time and a countless distance and reunite with Koutarou. It didn't matter if this was a different world. With her hair shining silver, she infused Saguratin with pure white magical power.

“Appear! Thunder God's Sword of Brilliance!”

The magical power poured into the sword turned into powerful electricity. With this, the sword could shock whatever it came into contact with. Without ruining Koutarou's fighting style, his offense and defense was enhanced by adding Harumi's magic onto his sword skills.

“Phew”

Koutarou exhaled slightly as he swung the sword he was so familiar with around. As he did, he hit the claws of a beast type automated weapon, and at the moment they came into contact, the weapon stopped moving as electricity flowed into it. Of course, the weapon had protection against its weakness, and it was only stopped for a short moment. However, that moment allowed for Koutarou to return into an attacking position and attack again. When the beast type automated weapon could move again after a short period of time, the tip of Koutarou's sword was already sticking into its body. Being struck by both the sword and the electricity within, the beast type automated weapon was tragically torn asunder.

While Koutarou and Harumi were showing off splendid cooperation, another pair wasn't losing to them. Those two were the magicians Yurika and Maki.

“Greater Acid Splash!”

Yurika sprayed out a strong acid from the tip of her cane and it rained down on the automated weapons attacking the two.

“Keep it up like that, Yurika!”

The next moment Maki swung her cane, converted into a greatsword, at the automated weapon covered in acid. The automated weapon being attacked by Maki used its own knife to protect itself, but as the greatsword struck the knife, the automated weapon was unable to withstand the impact and its arm fell off. Yurika's acid had seeped into the weapon from its openings and weakened it.

While Maki had defeated the enemy in a single strike, because she was using a greatsword she was left wide open after attacking. Protecting Maki during this moment was Yurika's job.

“Poison Cloud!”

Yurika enveloped the automated weapons holding guns and aiming for Maki with a poisonous cloud. As she did, the weapons stopped moving one after another and collapsed on the spot. Because of that, Maki was never attacked.

“... To think that poison would work on machines... Yurika is just full of surprises...”

The saved Maki found herself impressed. From a magician's common sense, using poison against a machine was not possible. Normally it was used against living creatures, as the poison spread through the body by inhaling it. But the truth was that poison not only deteriorated electric components, but it also had the property of being very conductive. Because of that the computer began malfunctioning and the high voltage parts were shorted. Common sense was getting in the way so nobody had tried, but poison could be used to destroy machines.

“Impressive... hey, what is it, Yurika”?

“No, I just got some dirt in my eyes...”

While Yurika had effectively used her magic to achieve great results, it was uncertain if this was her ideal way of fighting or not.

Part 7

The automated weapons had held an overwhelming numerical advantage, but Koutarou and the others had been dominated the fight from start to finish. The results spoke for themselves as after a few minutes, all of the automated weapons had been turned into scrap. Moreover, since they had been fighting with caution, they were hardly hurt. The biggest injury they had sustained was

Maki scratching her knee.

However, not everything had gone as well. There was a price to pay for not forcing themselves.

“No good. This area must have been holy ground, as passing through here makes it impossible to follow the spiritual energy”

”The spiritual energy of the land is too high Ho-!”

”Performing a detailed investigation on the outside of the holy ground will take too much time Ho-!”

The price to pay for their victory was that they had lost sight of Crimson and Green again. The direction they had escaped in was rich in spiritual energy, and it completely covered up their trail. The faint remnants of their spiritual energy not being covered up by magic mixed in with the spiritual energy of the land and Sanae and the haniwas lost track of it.

It would be possible to follow them once they left the holy ground, but they had no clue of where they would exit the holy ground. As a result they had to investigate the area outside of the holy ground, but as time passed, the trail of spiritual energy would grow weaker, making it impossible to detect before long.

“This is just Green's strategy coming out on top. She must have come up with this strategy after a great deal of planning”

Maki, who knew how Darkness Rainbow thought, reached that conclusion. Having rescued Crimson on her own, she must have been convinced her strategy would work. Her preparations were all set, and she surely had methods to evade all kinds of pursuit. Making this many preparations in such a short amount of time was far from normal, and Green's abilities deserved praise.

“I really should have chased after them at that time...”

Sanae sadly dropped her shoulders. Koutarou had told her not to force herself, but considering the situation they were in, she regretted her decision.

“It's okay, Sanae-chan”

However, Yurika smiled at Sanae. Unexpectedly, the person in charge was not disappointed in the slightest.

“Why?”

”Because we have a plan too”

”We do? What plan?”

Sanae's eyes opened wide in surprise. She was of course surprised that there was a plan, but she was also surprised as Yurika was so confidently mentioning it.

“Well, that's—”

Just as Yurika was about to explain the details to Sanae.

“Your Highness, Yurika-sama, I've confirmed the beacon. The detached force are successfully continuing their pursuit of Crimson and Green”

Ruth who was fiddling with her bracelet reported. Hearing that, Sanae's eyes practically bulged out in surprise.

“A detached force!? We had something like that!?”

”It was properly explained at the meeting remember?”

“R-Right. Tehehehe...”

The meeting had been drawn out and boring so Sanae hadn't really been listening. As a result, she had no way of knowing anything about a detached force. So all she could do was cover up with an embarrassed smile.

“S-So, what about the detached force?”

“Well—”

Yurika began explaining to Sanae again, and this time there were no obstructions.

Just like how Darkness Rainbow expected there to be a pursuit. Yurika and the others expected Darkness Rainbow to expect a pursuit. Though they didn't expect Darkness Rainbow to strike so suddenly.

However, they couldn't predict what kind of method Darkness Rainbow would use to evade pursuit. There were far to many possibilities, so having a plan for each individual way. So instead, Kiriha had the idea of aiming for the gap in Darkness Rainbow's awareness.

Kiriha focused on the automated weapons that had been destroyed during their last battle. She chose the ones that used spiritual energy technology and repaired and modified them to get them under her control. Since this was originally the People of the Earth's technology, and the radical faction scientists that had made them were also under her control, the modifications were not all that difficult.

When Green rescued Crimson, she had two of these modified automated weapons infiltrate her ranks. The IFF identified them as friendlies and their individual identification numbers were faked. With so many automated weapons around here, it would be difficult for Green to detect them. Moreover, even using her future forecast, it would be next to impossible to notice that the automated weapons had very slightly increased in number. Even if she did notice, it would be too late to stop the modified automated weapons from activating.

They were infiltrated into Green's ranks and left be for a while, only for them to be activated if need be. Green commanding a large amount of automated weapons and using her future forecast for the near future was the hole in awareness that Kiriha had targeted. Using her excellent brain, she had found this small hole and splendidly threaded through it.

The Land of Beginning

Part 1

Sunday, September 19

Koutarou and the others headed through the forest, relying on the information sent to them from the modified automated weapons. The group proceeded with Koutarou and Theia, and Shizuka and Ruth in the front and rear to make it easier for them to react to any surprise attacks. The others were lined up between them, with Yurika in the middle of their ranks. Yurika would sometimes catch glimpses of Kiriha's back.

She really is amazing... if she wasn't here, what would have happened...

Yurika stared at Kiriha's back and thought to herself that she was really happy that Kiriha was on her side. Kiriha's brain had turned the tables several times during these chain of events. Kiriha was most likely the most dangerous person to Darkness Rainbow. While there were many among them who were skilled at fighting, magic or science, nobody was a match for Kiriha's brains. Clan would be the runner-up, but in her case she was biased towards knowledge and inventions, and wasn't on Kiriha's level overall. When it came to finding who one needed to ask to resolve something, an overall balance was required. In that sense, Kiriha was the absolute number one.

“What is it, Yurika?”

That was when Kiriha sensed Yurika's glance and turned back towards her. She had her usual calm smile on her face. Just looking at her face, it was hard to believe she had the brains to corner magicians.

“No... uhm, Kiriha-san, if the time comes, I will protect you”

”What now, all of a sudden?”

Kiriha couldn't understand the intention behind Yurika's words and looked at her in confusion.

“I was just thinking that I might be the commander, but you are really the one moving us. Unlike me, there's no replacement for you”

“If you say something like that, Koutarou will scold you. He'd say that there's no replacement for anyone”

Kiriha smiled slightly and indicated Koutarou up the front with her glance. Yurika thought to herself that Koutarou would probably get angry.

“As people that might be true, but... looking at bigger picture during battles, we need you to stay energetic until the end”

Yurika believed that she had no replacements as a person, so she didn't believe it was okay for anyone to die. But when it came to the order of people getting knocked out in a battle, Kiriha should be one of the last. As long as she was fine, the chances of everyone surviving increased. That was what Yurika meant with no replacement.

“Keeping that from happening is my job. But I'm happy you feel that way. Thank you, Yurika”

Kiriha now understood what Yurika meant. But by the time her allies began falling, she had already failed as a general or an advisor. In order to prevent that she needed to come up with various schemes, making sure Yurika didn't have to protect her. That was her job. That said, she was still happy over how Yurika felt. They were words that came from admitting Kiriha's abilities. So Kiriha smiled at Yurika once more.

“No... it's nothing to thank me for...”

”That's not true”

”Uhm... Kiriha-san”

There was something that Yurika wanted to ask the gently smiling Kiriha. Being able to see through anything, she probably had an answer.

“Hm?”

“... Can we win?”

Unable to see what would happen next, Yurika felt anxious. That carried on to her worries for Kiriha's safety. That's why she wanted Kiriha with her excellent brains to say that everything would be fine.

“I wonder...”

However, Kiriha couldn't see the future either. All she could say was that to give it their all.

“However, we have to win. For everyone's sake”

“Yes”

If they worried about losing, they might let their chances of victory go. If they couldn't afford to lose they needed to focus on winning. That was all they could do to create a better future.

“Stay strong. Just focus on winning”

“... Yes, I'll try”

Darkness Rainbow's stronghold was near. The decisive battle that would determine Yurika's fate was ever closing in.

Part 2

Darkness Rainbow's stronghold was within the deepest portion of the forest. To reach it, one had to pass through land filled with spiritual energy and tunnels, making it hard to pursue someone there. In the center of all that was a large castle, and a town full of antique houses nobody was living in anymore surrounded it. Quite some time had passed since the houses were left empty, so they might be more accurately described as ruins. In other words, it was a town still rich in the atmosphere of the initial Folsaria.

“... To think it was in the Land of the Beginning...”

When she looked at the ruins, Maki muttered to herself. Since he hadn't heard that term before, Koutarou asked Maki.

“Aika-san, what is the Land of the Beginning?”

“It's just what it sounds like, this is where Folsaria began”

“From here?”

“Satomi-kun, you've heard that Folsaria was a country made by exiled people, right?”

“Yeah. I've heard something like that”

”This was the place they ended up in. Here they made their first town and eventually spread through all of Folsaria. That's why it is the Land of the Beginning”

According to legend, the people of Folsaria were people who had committed a great sin, and were exiled from their home country. That sin was said to be turning on the king and advocating world dominance.

After a long time, the descendants of those criminals reached this place. And as a repentance for their past sin, they created a kingdom without a king. The king belonged in their true home, and they instead ruled themselves through elder conferences. Even after being exiled, they wanted a connection to their true home.

The magical kingdom of Folsaria took its first steps here, but being in the deepest portion of a forest was inconvenient for spreading civilization. As such, as population increased, the capital was moved to the city of Thorthe which was built on a wide plain. People systematically moved over to Thorthe, leaving this place as ruins. In other words, this was a remainder of when the Folsarians had desperately struggled to stay alive. To the Folsarians, while this was a place that was hard to reach, it held historical value.

“So that's why Darkness Rainbow chose this as their new base”

Yurika who had listened in on Maki's explanation explained what she believed.

“I think so. I'm sure they intend to begin anew from here”

Maki believed the same. When Maki fell into Koutarou's and the others hands,

Darkness Rainbow had to change bases out of necessity. However, with the chances of their next battle deciding the future of Folsaria, they wanted a place that would serve as a symbol. And there was no place as suitable as the Land of the Beginning.

Part 3

The town was really antique, with most buildings simply made out of wood and stone. Because of that, only the stonework remained after so much time had passed. Even the stonework had somewhat collapsed, and only the sturdiest constructions remained intact.

“A town sure does deteriorate quickly when nobody is living in it...”

Harumi spun around and looked at the cityscape with only stonework remaining, and showed a sad smile. The main street that must have once been bustling with people was now only home to plants and trees. Almost no remnants of people living there remained.

“It's hard to look at property abandoned like this”

”Fufufu, you're a landlord after all, Kasagi-san”

Seeing Shizuka furrow her brows, looking at the same things she was, Harumi let out a cheerful laugh. The town was abandoned, but it wasn't like the populace had been ruined, as they had only moved. That's why Harumi only felt sad because of the town looked so desolate.

“Your Highness, Master, it looks like Darkness Rainbow's base is the castle on the top of that hill”

That was when Ruth, who had received data from the automated weapons that had infiltrated Darkness Rainbow's ranks, pointed out the building that she believed housed Darkness Rainbow's base.

“Hm, it's certainly a castle rich in atmosphere”

Theia looked at the old castle that Ruth pointed out and nodded approvingly. Being a building that required durability, the castle still maintained its old shape. Ivy and plants entwined themselves around the castle, giving it a feel like something out of a fairy tale. So Theia gave this castle a perfect mark in terms of suitability as a base for a group of magicians.

“Theia, we can leave the sightseeing for later. We have—”

—things we need to do. That was what Koutarou had intended to say, but those words were caught in his throat and never came out. Instead he began running towards the castle that still hadn't collapsed.

“What is it, Koutarou!?”

”Ridiculous, is something like this possible!?”

Not paying any heed to what Theia was saying, Koutarou used a stone stairway to run up to the roof of a building.

“What is the matter with Master?”

“I... don't know either. He just suddenly started running”

”We should follow him”

”Indeed”

Theia and Ruth chased after Koutarou. The remaining seven girls followed suit, and before long all ten of them were gathered on the roof. Standing on a higher point, they got a better view of the old castle.

“There's no doubting it... that's... hey, Clan! Come over here! And you too, Sakuraba-senpai!”

“What is it?”

“Satomi-kun?”

Being called out by Koutarou, Clan and Harumi moved up next to him. Koutarou pointed out the castle to the two and spoke loudly in a fluster.

“Take good look at that castle you two!! Don't you recognize it!?”

”Recognize? I haven't seen— Eh, ah...”

“That's.. no way!?”

The two suddenly understood why Koutarou had been so surprised and run up here, and they were just as surprised as him. They couldn't believe what they were seeing before their very eyes.

The appearance of the three standing in place and staring at the castle was not normal. It was clear that something big had happened. And so, as the representative of the remaining girls , Yurika who was in charge asked about the situation.

“Satomi-san, what is it? Why are you three so surprised?”

“... That is the castle of Sariachal[1]. The very same castle of Sariachal that Clan and I blew away with the super-space-time repulsion shell!!”

However, the answer from Koutarou far exceeded the girls expectations.

Part 4

When he realized that what he was looking at was the castle of Sariachal, Koutarou felt such shock it was like the world he was on was crumbling apart.

“... Now I get it... that's why they came to room 106...”

However, by accepting this, the pieces of the puzzle started falling into place. Using this truth to reconstruct the collapsed world, light was shed on parts that were previously unseen. The fact that so many girls had invaded Koutarou's room was not a coincidence.

According to Dark Crimson, the Folsarians were once People of the Earth that separated from the other tribes. And now that they had found the castle of Sariachal, they understood that Folsarians had actually come from the past Forthorthe. In other words, Folsarians and People of the Earth were actually descendants of Forthorthians.

In Koutarou's final battle in the past of Forthorthe, Maxfern and his group of

alchemists, and Grevanas and his group of magicians, had been blown away by the super-space-time repulsion shell. And the two groups had drifted through space-time and ended up in the past Earth and Folsaria.

Maxfern and his group that arrived on Earth created their own culture based alchemy. The ruins at Koutarou's part-time job were most likely that. However, for some reason they had vanished. The virus that had been blown away with them might have been responsible for that. In that case, only those with blood mixed with Earth's humans would have survived. Reason aside, Maxfern and his group had indeed vanished. And those that survived inherited the technology and culture and developed on it, eventually becoming the People of the Earth.

Meanwhile, Grevanas and his group of magicians had reached Folsaria. They regretted turning their fangs on the royal family alongside Maxfern, and created a kingdom without a king. That was the magical kingdom of Folsaria. Combining with Forthorthe and Sariachal they got Folsaria. The capital being named Thorthe was made by just removing ”For” from Forthorthe. Everything made sense.

The People of the Earth began declining, and there was internal conflict within Folsaria, and eventually both of them reached out towards Earth in order to invade. In that process, Sanae was turned into a ghost, and Yurika became a magical girl. Theia and Ruth arrived at Earth by adhering to their customs, and Kiriha appeared as the People of the Earth's vanguard. While they all appeared to be completely unrelated at the start, they had a common connection in the past Forthorthe.

“... In other words, this is all because of me. This was my battle from the very beginning...”

With this, Koutarou was given a new viewpoint. The girls appearing in room 106 all originated from Koutarou's actions. In other words, this entire situation was all Koutarou's responsibility. Up until now, Koutarou had acted to help the girls, but it was different from now on. Koutarou had to take responsibility for what his own actions had caused.

Part 5

Learning that they had all met as part of one huge event came as a shock to all of the girls. This didn't apply to the first five girls, but all nine of them.

By the time Shizuka's parents passed away in the fire, Alunaya's soul was most likely already residing within her. She had survived thanks to that. If Harumi didn't have the powers of Alaia and Signaltin, she might have died at the marathon rally. And examples weren't even needed for Maki and Clan.

The fact that they had all met and formed relationships was all related to Koutarou's time slip. However, Koutarou didn't time slip until after the invaders had arrived. The complex cross wiring of time-space and cause and effect had created this situation. It was only natural for the girls to be shaken up.

“I had thought of that possibility, but... but to learn that this really was the case is a big surprise”

”Kiriha, you noticed?”

“Yeah. Space is so large, yet we were all gathered on such a small scope. However, it wasn't like I had any conclusive evidence. And as a result I am this surprised”

During the decisive battle underground, Kiriha had heard of her connection with Maya in the past. From there, she began seeing a connection between herself, Sanae, Yurika and Maki. She had thought that it was a coincidence, but it seemed that the opposite was true.

“I'm a little better off than you are”

”Oh?”

”When I learned that Koutarou was the Blue Knight I used up most of my surprise”

“I see, in your case that's certainly true”

Theia and Kiriha looked at each other and smiled. Though a strange fact had

come to light, it resulted in strengthening their feelings of solidarity.

“In other words, Koutarou is our destined person”

Because of Koutarou's desperate efforts in the past world, the girls had appeared in front of him. Alternatively, ever since the girls appeared in front of Koutarou, he had desperately struggled to return to his own world. Sanae believed that just like it was unclear what came first, the chicken or the egg, the girls and Koutarou were inseparable due to fate.

“I think so too. I'm sure we exist for Satomi-kun's sake”

Harumi agreed with Sanae's line of thought. Koutarou's straight and earnest heart had brought the girls to his side. The girls wished to heal Koutarou's wounded heart. Harumi believed that was the reason for why they had been born. No, she wished that was the case. That was because she admired a destined encounter and true love.

“I just hope Satomi-kun feels the same way... a one-sided destiny would be so lonely”

Shizuka was a little worried if Koutarou felt the same way that they did. If he thought of the girls as his own destined people. That was an important question for the girls.

“It's okay. Master returned to our side didn't he, even declining the invitation of the legendary princess Alaia...”

Ruth believed in Koutarou. Certainly, one on one, they might not stand a chance against Alaia, however, the nine of them together wouldn't lose. They were needed by Koutarou. He sensed his fate was with them. That's why he had returned from the past world.

With Ruth's words, the girls shock began to fade.

“It's only obvious for my knight to return to my side”

”He's also my first love”

“Of course Koutarou loves us... but he gets angry if I try to get in the bath with him”

“S-Sanae, you did something like that with Bertorion!?”

They had been surprised when they learned that Koutarou had caused everything because of his time slip. But thinking about it calmly, destined people tended to have that kind of nature. Because fate intertwined in a complicated manner, he was their destined person. Having understood that, the girls conviction that Koutarou was their destined person grew stronger.

“Destined person, huh..”

Yurika muttered and looked at Koutarou. He and the girls were looking at the old castle of Sariachal. His profile looked more strict than usual. Seeing that, Yurika showed an expression of sorrow for some reason.

“Is something the matter, Yurika?”

Noticing that expression, Maki stood next to Yurika and stared at Koutarou as well. She wanted to know what caused Yurika's expression to change like that.

“I feel like I understand why Satomi-san said he didn't want anyone to fight”

“What do you mean?”

“Maki-chan, look at Satomi-san. He has a scary face doesn't he?”

”You're right... it doesn't suit him”

Like with Yurika, Maki felt like Koutarou's expression didn't suit him. The normal Koutarou had a more innocent expression. His usual atmosphere was far different.

“My beloved face is more— I see, now I see”

”Yes. I really don't want to see Satomi-san with that expression. I want him to return to his usual self as quickly as possible”

“... Me too, Yurika...”

Koutarou had said that he didn't like it when Yurika had the expression of a magical girl. And Yurika felt the same for the expression he showed when acting as the Blue Knight. She wanted return Koutarou to his usual self as soon as possible. Maki of course felt the same way. Not a single girl loved the fighting Koutarou.

“I'm sure Satomi-san is feeling responsible. That what happened underground

and in Folsaria was his fault...”

“That might be true, but that's the fault of the ones who caused the coup d'etat. If Satomi-kun hadn't done anything, things would have gotten worse”

Koutarou's actions had indeed given birth to the People of the Earth and the magical kingdom of Folsaria. However, Koutarou did that to save a great deal of lives as Maxfern and Grevanas were planning on indiscriminately spreading the virus. Maxfern and his group were thrown into a situation that should have killed them, so they were in no position to complain and should be happy they were still alive. The problems the People of the Earth and Folsaria experienced after that was Maxfern's and Grevanas' responsibility, and Koutarou had no reason to feel responsibility. But because he didn't feel the same way, he was now acting like the Blue Knight. Maki and Yurika couldn't help but feel impatient.

“Satomi-san is not the Blue Knight. And we are not heroes of justice”

Yurika could now understand why Koutarou would accept that Yurika was a magical girl, but rejected it. Neither Koutarou, Yurika or anyone else should show an expression like that.

“Our bonds and fate don't belong within battles. We have room 106, a place we can return home to!”

Koutarou and all nine girls wanted to return home to room 106 as quickly as possible and return to their normal selves.

Part 6

Having chosen the Land of the Beginning as their new base showed Darkness Rainbow's resolve. The Land of the Beginning was a place that held a lot of historical meaning, so choosing this place as your base and then retreating was essentially equivalent to defeat. In other words, their indomitable resolve could be seen from their decision.

“Once Crimson gets back, the battle will start... it's finally starting”

When Maki had been captured by Koutarou and the others, Dark Purple was the one that chose this as the location for Darkness Rainbow's base. Their next battle with Rainbow Heart would be their last, and the magical kingdom of Folsaria would be reformed with Darkness Rainbow at its center. For that sake, there was no place more suitable for their base than this.

“... Kai... once this battle is over, the two of us will...”

Purple looked over to the cylindrical glass tank left in her personal laboratory. Within her eyes was deep passion and love, making it seem like her normal calmness and cruelty were a lie. Her glance was fully intended for the remains of her lover, within the cylindrical tank full of preservation fluid.

If she didn't defeat Rainbow Heart, obtaining all the sacrifices she required was but a fleeting dream. Behind Purple's resolve to battle Rainbow Heart was her desire to revive her passed away lover as quickly as possible.

“... You've waited that long for this... just wait a little longer...”

However, her powerful desire hadn't clouded her decisions. She absolutely couldn't afford to fail at reviving her lover, so she had made preparations upon preparations, waiting for so long. Purple had endured the strong desire within her that would drive a normal person insane and finally reached today, the big day where the decisive battle against Rainbow Heart would be fought. Purple stared at her lover's remains as she recalled the days up until now.

After facing her lover for a while, a knock could be heard from the door to the laboratory.

“Purple, GreGree brought Crim-chan back”

It was Dark Orange who had knocked. With her awfully cute voice, Purple could tell the moment she opened her mouth.

“Okay, I'll be right there. Please go on ahead”

”Oka~y”

Normally, Purple would be upset by having her time with her lover interrupted, but now was different. The time she had waited for was finally here.

“Then I'm leaving, Kai... I'll be fine like I always am, so just wait for my return

there. While thinking of how you'll abuse me when you revive like always...”

Normally Purple would reluctantly leave this room. However, a strong power of will burned within her eyes as she left. With Crimson back, that meant that the decisive battle would start. She had always waited for this moment, so it was only obvious for her to get so motivated.

Part 7

Darkness Rainbow had spent a lot of labor and time to rescue Crimson, but even then there was still a chance of failure. That's why the attack on Rainbow Heart would begin the moment the rescue operation finished, regardless of whether it succeeded or not.

“... Purple, you're awful. There's a limit to how much you can use a person”

“That's not true. We'll at least wait until you finish dinner”

”You mean that you'll only wait until I finish”

Having returned to the Land of the Beginning, the remaining four leaders of Darkness Rainbow welcomed Crimson and Green. They had already finished their preparations, and were ready to go. Once Crimson and Green were prepared, they would begin their attack. Having heard that from Purple, Crimson instinctively stared up into the sky.

“But still, you pulled it off, GreGree”

Orange heartily beat Green on the back. As a matter of fact, Orange had been very skeptical about the rescue operation. She had worried that Green might get caught as well, and that being the case they simply shouldn't try it at all. Having thought like that, her opinion of Green improved when she returned with Crimson in hand.

“Ouch... i-it just means that there are openings in everything”

Green frowned from getting hit in the back but didn't raise her voice. She too

was happy that she had been able to rescue Crimson and she understood that Orange was praising her.

“There's no need to be humble, Green. With you and Crimson, the battle will proceed in our favor”

“Yellow is right. Things will be a lot easier now”

Yellow and Blue agreed with Orange. Everyone in Darkness Rainbow was pleased with Green's hard work and Crimson's return.

But still, there's no one who is pleased with Crimson herself returning...

Rather than getting slapped on the back, Green was more displeased about nobody worrying for Crimson. All four of them were only focused on the coming battle... not a single one of them was truly happy to meet Crimson again.

Navy-san might have...

Green thought of Maki for just a moment. Green had noticed that the relationship between Maki and Crimson was different from the other leaders. That's why Maki might have been happy with Crimson returning. However, Green soon chased her thoughts of Maki away. Being so attached to Crimson, Green didn't want to admit that Maki held special meaning to Crimson.

“Green, do you have a moment?”

“Yes”

Being called out by Purple, Green stopped thinking and headed towards her right away. She was aware that there was no time.

“What do you want to know?”

“I want you to tell me how the enemy will move. The situation of Rainbow Heart's main force, if possible the location of the seven Rainbow's, things like that”

A reconnaissance force had been dispatched, but Purple wanted to double check with Green's forecasts. Green admired that calm judgment while grabbing her cane and beginning on an incantation so familiar to her.

“Precognition”

As Green cast her spell, a vast amount of information entered her head. Her forecast allowed her to see the future of all parallel worlds, they overlapped and produced an image. So she could clearly see many futures, with the futures with a lower chance of happening being more dim. If she were to forecast the future of Earth's position, the image would be as clear as a photo taken by a pro. However, if she tried to forecast the position of a certain person, the image would be blurry like a photo taken by an amateur. In other words, the more uncertain elements, the blurrier the image got.

“Uhm... the main force will deploy to match our deployment”

“Are you sure?”

”Since the future is so close now, there's only a 5% margin of error”

”So that's all they can do even with reserve forces... well they can't leave the capital open, so they can't do anything drastic”

Green forecast Darkness Rainbow's forces clashing against Rainbow Heart's forces. The forecast produced a very clear image, so the chances of the future differing from it was very small. Her experience told her that the difference is no more than 5%. In other words, if Rainbow Heart had prepared a force to ambush them, the chances of them were 5% or less. An ambush of 5% or less was well within the range they could respond to. If the forecast was correct, Darkness Rainbow would most likely win due to the weapons of the People of the Earth and Forthorthe in their possession.

“Then what about the Rainbow's?”

However, they still couldn't take it easy. If they didn't confirm the whereabouts of seven strongest within Rainbow Heart, something unexpected might still happen. Purple was more cautious of this than the 5%.

“It looks like two are protecting room 106 in Kitsushouharukaze city”

”Fufu, it seems like the attack from before had its effect. Their forces are getting split up”

Rainbow Heart couldn't leave room 106 unguarded, even though the decisive battle against Darkness Rainbow was so close. Even more so considering the attack from before.

“Four of them are working together with the main forces. It looks like it could be three as well, but... well, I think its four”

”In a head-on confrontation we'd pit our six against their four. In that case we would win even without Maya's powers”

Darkness Rainbow's leaders and Rainbow Heart's arc-wizards were on the same level. Those with exceptional strength would sometimes appear, but that didn't apply to the current members. With the numerical advantage, Darkness Rainbow was almost assured victory.

“That's six... what about the last one?”

“Just wait a moment... where is she I wonder...?”

It was easy to read the future of people in front of her, but reading the future of people far away was quite difficult in comparison.

“Who is the last one?”

“Nana's apprentice”

“Nana's?”

Hearing that, Purple's expression changed. Rainbow Nana had once taken on and incapacitated all seven leaders of Darkness Rainbow in the past. Learning that her apprentice was acting on her own was eerie.

“Wha!? This is bad Purple! Nana's apprentice is coming here!!”

And Purple's sinking feeling turned out to be true. Green reported on Nana's apprentice's, Yurika's, position with a shrill voice.

“Are you sure!?”

“There's a margin of error of less than 10%, it's safe to believe that they've at least found this place!”

”How did they find us!?”

”I don't know! I checked the past from before I rescued Crimson but couldn't see anything like it! Yet they're on their way!”

Green couldn't just see the present, but she could also see the past to a certain degree. Green checked the past from before her rescue operation to the

present, but she couldn't see anything like this, yet here they were at the Land of the Beginning. Normally this shouldn't be possible, and Green fell into confusion.

“Calm down, Green”

That was when Crimson scolded Green. In response, Green's body twitched and she turned to look in Crimson's direction. Having finished her dinner, Crimson rose from her seat and joined in on the conversation.

“That woman, Kurano Kiriha, is probably behind this too. I'm sure she knows a weakness of future forecast that we don't know about”

That was just Crimson's intuition, but she was actually spot on.

Using the fact that Green's forecasts grew more blurry the further into the future she looked, Kiriha had finished the modifications and positioning of the automated weapons several days ago. After that she had left it completely untouched. So if Green would have used her forecast to check several days ago, she should be able to see Clan and the others modifying the automated weapons. But right now she didn't have the time for that. In the end, she didn't reach the conclusion that the automated weapon had been modified.

“We should have killed her in our last battle”

”What do we do, Purple?”

”Isn't that obvious? We will order our entire army to attack! And after we've defeated Rainbow Yurika and those others here, we will rejoin the army and annihilate Rainbow Heart!”

But regardless of forecast, now that they were this close, what they had to do wouldn't change. Their base might have been found, but that didn't matter if Rainbow Heart was defeated.

“Just bring it on, Rainbow! I will reclaim the past!”

Obeying Purple's order, Darkness Rainbow's army began moving. The leaders moved to intercept Yurika and the others while the main force marched towards the capital of Thorthe. The curtains of the battle over the magical kingdom of Folsaria between Darkness Rainbow and Rainbow Heart rose.

The Return of the Magical Girl

Part 1

Sunday, September 19

Koutarou and the others had been able to confirm that the castle of Sariachal was Darkness Rainbow's base, but they weren't sure how they'd attack it. Since this was the enemy base, if they attacked from the front, they would likely end up facing lots of enemies. If they were attacked by the six leaders at that time, they'd be in serious danger. Koutarou and the others didn't know that the main force had already left, so they were still unable to attack.

“We had to stop their tinplate soldiers or we wouldn't win, right?”

What Sanae referred to as tinplate soldiers were Forthorthe's and the People of the Earth's weapons. Previously, the difference in forces made it so Rainbow Heart's defeat was near impossible, but with the weapon groups they now had, that difference had been overturned. Koutarou and the others heading to Darkness Rainbow's base was because there should be a way to stop the weapon groups there.

“But going in from the front is dangerous” Yurika said as she dropped her shoulders. Attacking without a plan was bad. Taking some measures was necessary. Harumi raised her hand and spoke.

“Satomi-kun, can I say something?”

“Please go ahead, Sakuraba-senpai”

“Isn't sneaking in the only thing we can do in this sort of situation?”

If they didn't want to go in from the front, they should sneak in. It was a simple

idea but highly effective.

“Bertorion, I agree with Harumi”

Clan agreed with Harumi. Rather than feeling the need for it, she wanted to avoid a direct confrontation.

“Yurika, what do you think?”

Once Harumi and Clan said that they wanted to sneak in, Koutarou began leaning in their direction. However, Yurika was in charge, and he wanted to hear her opinion. After gathering her thoughts as she stared at the castle for a moment, she answered the question.

“... Satomi-san, do you think we can sneak into that castle?”

Yurika worried about the very property castles had. In some cases, sneaking in might even be more dangerous.

“It would probably be difficult. Buildings constructed during periods of a lot of wars are troublesome”

Koutarou was also worried about that part. Having experience in attacking castles and fortresses in the past Forthorthe, he was well aware that this castle was a structure of war. It of course had measures to prevent attacks and infiltration.

“But it's probably still better than going in from the front”

”I understand. We want to avoid fighting, in more meanings than one, and we don't have time. Let's sneak in”

Yurika believed in Koutarou's judgment, but people's lives were the ultimate factor in deciding. If they entered from the front, there was a chance that they would have to fight against Darkness Rainbow soldiers and in the following confusion there might be sacrifices. If they snuck in and accomplished their objective as quickly as possible to force a surrender there would be less sacrifices. Moreover, they also had a time limit, meaning that attacking from the front was even less preferable.

Part 2

If they were going to sneak in, they would need to decide on a route. For that, Koutarou's knowledge from the past came in handy. Old castles had parts that required them to be connected to the outside. The most convenient of which was the aqueduct.

Castle from that age were required to function as fortresses. Therefore, they had to be able to get water from the outside or they wouldn't be able to last in a siege. In the case of the castle of Sariachal, that came in the form of an underground aqueduct.

“How does it look, Clan?”

“We're in luck! The facilities from 2,000 years ago are still here!”

”Alright, luck is starting to get on our side!”

In the past world, Koutarou and Clan had gotten knowledge on the castle of Sariachal when they were thinking up plans of how to attack Maxfern and his group. One of the suggestions back then was to infiltrate via the underground aqueduct. Koutarou and Clan thought of trying that, and as luck would have it, the scout craft that was sent underground found the underground aqueduct had continued to be used. This was a big chance.

“Kiriha-san, what do you think?”

“... The other side doesn't know that we have this information. Even if they use the future forecast, the chances of them seeing us infiltrating from the aqueduct should be less than it really is. However... we should still use some randomness”

Kiriha said and pulled out cards from her bosom, fanning them out and presented them to Koutarou who drew one of them. Since Green relied on her future forecast, having several plans and deciding on which one to go with by drawing a random card like this was the safest way.

“... Then it's decided. Let's go with the underground aqueduct”

Koutarou had drawn an old card with most of its past metallic luster gone and had a motif of Kabutonga. On its surface were the characters that Kiriha had scribbled when she was young. It was a special card only Koutarou and Kiriha understood. The bingo card when deciding on strategies was always this card.

Part 3

The underground aqueduct was connected to a water vein, so Koutarou and the others entered the water vein from an old well and moved on to the aqueduct.

The moved underwater, but they all had barriers or spells to breathe underwater or other measures, so it wasn't a particularly difficult problem.

“Sanae”

”Aye! Thank you for your hard work!”

”Don't be so loud. We're in the enemy's castle”

“Right”

Koutarou released the armor's barrier and put down Sanae who he had been carrying on his back. Sanae landed on the stone paved floor with a familiar motion. They were currently in a maintenance passage running next to the underground aqueduct. If they continued on that passage they would be able to get inside of the castle.

“Still, we were lucky the aqueduct and water vein were connected”, Harumi said as she looked at the water vein she had just come out of. If the aqueduct hadn't been connected to it, infiltrating the castle would have been difficult. Moreover, the people of Folsaria would have had a much harder time. If the people thrown from Forthorthe hadn't ended up here they would surely have had much more tragic lives.

“Harumi, it's less luck and more thanks to their efforts. I think they desperately dug at the aqueduct to connect it to the water vein. Well, even then that was still very lucky”

Having been sent here from Forthorthe, the castle's underground aqueduct became useless. The water vein that the aqueduct was connected wasn't sent with it. So the people at the time began digging where the aqueduct stopped and connected it to Folsaria's water vein. Reaching the water vein was one of the reasons why the people thrown to Folsaria from Forthorthe had survived, as there were neither any lakes or rivers in the area.

“So Maxfern's castle is up ahead... it feels kind of strange”

“To think that the final battleground in the legend of the Blue Knight would still exist... I can't believe it”

Compared to Harumi and the others, Theia and Ruth had a different impression. The castle of Sariachal was a legendary place to them. It only existed within movies and books. That's why it was a strange feeling for them, knowing they were entering a legend.

“At least this is being properly maintained. Very good”

Shizuka looked around and smiled. The urban area was in ruins, so as a landlord it was an unpleasant sight. However, since this passage handled drinking water, it was well maintained and Shizuka was in a cheerful mood.

“This isn't a laughing matter, Kasagi-san”

“Oh, why?”

“If it's being maintained, it means that there is someone who maintains it”

Maki was right, if this passage was clear it meant there was someone cleaning it regularly. It would be very dangerous if Koutarou and the others were to run across those in charge of that.

“It's okay. For places like these, you clean regularly after a schedule. They wouldn't show up at times when people would be using the water”

”I see... as expected of Kasagi-san”

Shizuka showed off her experience as a landlord. Performing maintenance on the aqueduct couldn't be done when the residents were using the water. They wouldn't want garbage mixed in with the water. That's why maintenance would usually be scheduled for early mornings or midnight. Since it was still daytime now, the chances of people coming were low.

“Well then, we've safely gotten inside... but the problems start from here on. Yurika what do you plan on doing now?”

“The controls for the weapons are probably in the command room or laboratory. If possible I want to get there without being noticed, but if that doesn't seem possible we'll break through”

“Understood. Wait a moment... Ruth, come here for a second”

”Yes, Kiriha-sama”

“Use your scout to gather information alongside the haniwas”

“I understand”

“Ho-, Leave it to us Ho-!”

“It's our time to shine Ho-”

Kiriha and Ruth got to work gathering information at once. They wanted to reach the controller for the automated weapons without being found by the enemy, so trying to rush through the castle was a bad idea. Instead they would suppress their unease and gather information.

Part 4

Koutarou and the others left the underground aqueducts passage and entered the castle. They were currently hiding themselves between the second and third floors of the stairs that had been nearby. They hadn't run into anyone at all until now. Moreover, there weren't many signs of people being in the castle. It was impossible to tell from the outside, but while there was an absolute minimum amount of guards there wasn't enough to be called a force. The castle was practically deserted.

“This is bad... they've already left”

This place didn't have the peculiar atmosphere of a base ready to go to war. Koutarou could tell as he had experience with that. Combined with how quiet the castle was, it was most likely that the soldiers had already moved.

“They are most likely already advancing on the capital. We must have missed each other on the way”

While Koutarou and the others chased after Crimson and Green, the main forces had left on a different route. Koutarou and the others had gotten all the way here without noticing that. It wouldn't be strange if the capital was already under attack from Darkness Rainbow. Not being able to confirm the current situation was painful.

“But since Crimson-san and Green-san returned here, the attack still shouldn't have happened. We can still make it if we hurry!”

Yurika still hadn't given up hope. There was still a chance to prevent this war. It was hard to imagine that Darkness Rainbow would challenge Rainbow Heart to a

decisive battle without Crimson and Green. And since those two had returned here, there should still be some time before the battle begins. It shouldn't start until they recover and regroup with the rest.

“Koutarou, Yurika is right! There is still a chance if we can seize control of the automated weapons!”

“Yeah, you're right. Let's just continue as planned!”

Koutarou and the others nodded and began moving again. They carefully stepped forward on the third floor. The stairs they had been using only connected floors one through three. This was to keep a single set of stairs from reaching all the parts of the castle in the case of an attack. If they wanted to go further up they would need to find another set of stairs. In order to reach the seventh floor, the top of the castle, they would need to climb one more set of stairs after that.

“... I wonder if things will go that easily”

However, just as Koutarou and the others had left the stairs and were trying to pass through a hall, someone's voice echoed throughout it.

“Who's there!?”

Koutarou instinctively raised his voice and unsheathed his sword. The voice in question laughed in response.

“Fufufu, that's my question, Mr. intruder”

The voice belonged to Dark Purple. She stepped out from the shadow of a thick pillar and stood in front of Koutarou with a cheerful expression. Besides her were the five other leaders. With the exception of a Dark Navy, it was all of the leaders of Darkness Rainbow. Having noticed Koutarou and the others approaching, they had waited for them here.

“... To think the leader would greet us personally”

“The soldiers are all out after all. We're running short on hands. Once we defeat you, we'll be heading to the battlefield as well. Being low on manpower really is unpleasant”

”Then I'll repeat what you said. I wonder if things will go that easily”

“Oh, did I say something like that?”

Even in front of Koutarou and the others, Purple was still confident. She didn't even seen to be even slightly fazed by Koutarou's remark. She shouldn't be all that different from Koutarou and the others in terms of age, but she was very mature. Her confidence came from that maturity.

It's not as bad as Maya, but... she's a troublesome opponent...

Koutarou forced a confident expression as well, while sensing that Purple was a powerful enemy. In fighting and war, those who remained calm at all times would win.

After Koutarou's and Purple's short exchange, Yurika stepped up next to Koutarou. Speaking to Purple was originally her job.

“Purple-san, can't you stop this battle?”

They were the words Yurika had repeated whenever she faced Darkness Rainbow. She would always ask that before a battle. And these words made the calm Purple very irritated.

“How many times do you people have repeat the same discussion before you're satisfied!? We've decided to fight a long time ago! Yet why do you keep asking the same thing!?”

Purple gave words to her irritation, as if she was disgusted with this entire discussion.

That Purple is... just what on Earth...?

Maki couldn't help but feel confused by Purple's behavior. Even among the leaders of Darkness Rainbow, Purple stood on top. That had naturally occurred as she was always calm. However, there was no calmness in her now.

Purple had gotten emotional because she had seen a glimpse of herself in Yurika. When she was in Rainbow Heart, she had fought against Darkness Rainbow like that. However, Maki didn't know that, so she simply had a perplexed expression on her face.

“If I don't ask, a battle will start anyways. We Rainbow Heart exist to protect the lives of the people, so the only path I can take is to continue asking”

Instead, Yurika was the calm one. She knew that this was a situation that she couldn't talk her way out of. Of course, so did Darkness Rainbow. But even then, Yurika only had one path she could take, because she's the magical girl of love and courage, Rainbow Yurika.

“Then I will just crush it! I will teach you that the path you believe in is nothing but an illusion!”

And that was probably all Purple could do. The appearance of Yurika and her friends facing her overlapped when she had faced the necromancer in the past. In other words, if she didn't reject Yurika, she would be rejecting her current self. Defeating Yurika and reviving her lover was the only future that should be affirmed.

“Purple! Now you're talking my language!”

“Don't get too excited, Crimson. Or you'll get the rug swept from under your feet again”

Crimson and Green backed up Purple from both sides. The remaining three, Orange, Blue and Yellow moved the same way and fanned out with Crimson and Purple in the center. Behind the girls, a crowd of automated weapons appeared. Just like Koutarou and the others had gone for the finish, Darkness Rainbow were planning on annihilating the enemies before them.

“Purple-san!”

”It's not going to happen Yurika”

”But...”

“You're right. However, if you die here what will happen to Folsaria?”

“... I-I understand...”

Yurika tried to continue persuading Purple, but Koutarou stopped her. With the enemies ready to attack at any time, trying to talk any further might be dangerous. If she was attacked while she was talking she would be defeated in the blink of an eye. With there being no replacements for Yurika and the others, they would have to give up on persuasion in order to stop the war.

“If this is to protect the people of Folsaria, I will fight!”

It might not have been the correct decision, but it was the best of what was available. Believing that, Yurika grabbed her cane.

“That's right Yurika! Now is the time to fight to protect them!”

“Being a hero is hard! Fight, Yurika! This Sanae-chan will forgive you!”

”Not fighting is ideal, but in reality the ideal is far away. Don't grieve over your ideal not being within reach yet. There is meaning in continuing your pursuit for the ideal. You are not a god, you are just human!”

“I'll do my best!”

More importantly, Yurika had friends who knew that she was just a normal girl who hated fighting. She was able to fight because she believed that she would be able to return to her normal everyday life with them.

“Fufufu, you don't get anything at all! Rainbow!”

Witnessing this, Purple's irritation was starting to reach its limit. Yurika had never experienced losing something truly precious to her. Because she didn't know the desire Purple felt every day, she could remain as a magical girl of justice. Purple's strong feelings of wanting to correct that unfairness started the battle.

“Your defeat was determined the moment you walked in here!”

The moment Purple said so, the anomalies began.

“Network connection lost. Communication to the Blue Knight is impossible”

“The comms are down!? Why!?”

”Me too! We've been completely separated from the Blue Knight!”

The first anomaly was reported by Ruth's bracelet. All forms of communications were being disrupted, and they lost the ability to communicate with the Blue Knight. As a result, they lost the support from their ship.

“Satomi-san, suddenly I can't gather any magical power! I can't use magic like this!”

”Blue Knight! The supply of magic suddenly stopped—”

“Why!? Signaltin's powers stopped!?”

The magicians felt the next anomaly. Yurika and Maki could no longer use magic, and the supply of magical power to Alunaya and Harumi stopped. As a result the three magicians and Shizuka returned to normal girls.

“... I'm starting to feel sick... what is this...”

”Spiritual Energy Field output is decreasing! This is bad Ho-!”

“Only 30% of the generator is reaching the field output Ho-!”

Finally was Sanae and the haniwas. The spiritual energy they controlled was drastically reduced. What was reduced was the amount of spiritual energy being output, which meant that Sanae's body reinforcement and the haniwas' barrier grew a lot weaker.

“Just what is going on!?”

In Koutarou's case, he lost abilities apart from his armor. With the communications cut off he couldn't call for Signaltin, and would have to fight with Saguratin, but less than half of the spiritual energy was passing through the sword. His body enhancing wasn't working as he wanted, and he couldn't see auras very well. Apart from the purely mechanical armor, nothing else could be used.

“Let me tell you, Boy”

Koutarou and the others were puzzled by the sudden power down when a new voice echoed in the hall. Koutarou had heard that voice before. It was the voice of someone who had been a pain in his side many times and was also Maki's master, the former Dark Navy, Maya.

“Maya!? Are you doing something!?”

”It's not just Maya. It's me too”

”Elexis!”

Maya and Elexis appeared in front of Koutarou and the others as well. Neither of them seemed ready to fight as they calmly looked at Koutarou and the others.

“It's simple. We've analyzed your power and are jamming it”

“It took a lot of hard work to make this you know”

Elexis showed of a 30 centimeters big metallic cylinder to Koutarou. It was a device that jammed gravitational waves, spiritual waves and magical waves. This was the device that had sealed Koutarou's and the others powers.

“In order for it not to affect us and only seal your powers, we had to gather and analyze data beforehand. It took quite a long time too”

“I see... so that's why you left without a fight in the underground and never even showed up the other day. It was all to make that!”

With that, Koutarou could understand the situation. Maya and Elexis had calculated that they would win with this, so they hadn't bothered actively attacking before. Darkness Rainbow had also cooperated in gathering data so that they could make sure they win against Rainbow Heart.

“The only uncertain elements in this battle are you”

“If we don't eliminate you then the outcome would be the same as in the underground”

“But if we exclude you, victory will come on its own”

”In other words, we will eliminate all of you first”

Since Koutarou and the others started working together, they became too powerful. And they could turn the tides of war just from their own whims. Since there were reinforcements that were stronger than the enemy they were fighting against, a win in the war was only temporary. That's why Koutarou and the others had to be eliminated first. It was a natural reasoning.

“But there's something I don't understand”

“What don't you understand, Koutarou-kun? It's clearly logical”

Koutarou had his doubts, which caused Elexis to spread his arms wide open and question Koutarou. He figured that it can't be that important.

“That's not what I'm talking about! Elexis, you know that they are descendants of the magicians led by Grevanas too, don't you!?”

“Oh... I'm impressed you noticed, Koutarou-kun”

Elexis narrowed his eyes slightly. Elexis had heard of Folsaria's creation from

Maya. Upon learning that the name of the first leader was Grevanas, anyone from Forthorthe could understand. However he was surprised that Koutarou knew.

Why does he know something that only the elders of Rainbow Heart know? Did he learn it when he came to this castle? Or did the elders reveal it too him? Either way, Koutarou-kun really does have some kind of secret...

Because of that, Elexis' doubts of Koutarou grew deeper. Regardless of if he understood after seeing the castle, or if the elders had revealed the secret to him, Koutarou had a special something to him. It was hard to believe that he was just a normal boy.

“Elexis, if you know, then why would you have them fight!? They want to return to Forthorthe!! You could easily take them back couldn't you!?”

What didn't make sense to Koutarou was that Elexis hadn't taken Darkness Rainbow to Forthorthe. Darkness Rainbow's true objective was to return to their true home. If Elexis were to take them there, they wouldn't have a reason to fight.

“Just taking them there isn't enough. That won't change Forthorthe!”

“What!?”

”If the magical kingdom of Folsaria remains as it is now, even if I were to bring them to Forthorthe that would be the end of it! The elders would never allow an army of magicians to intervene with another country! However, that would be possible after Darkness Rainbow wins! This is necessary in order to change Forthorthe”

“Ridiculous, you'd start a war in this country for something like that!?”

Koutarou was aghast by Elexis' words. Elexis was trying to revolutionize Forthorthe's current political system, and he would use the magical kingdom of Folsaria to do so. For that end he had made a deal with Darkness Rainbow and supplied them with various technologies. In return they would cooperate with Elexis after they had won. And once everything was over, he would bring those who wanted with him to Forthorthe. After Elexis' revolution, Forthorthe should easily be able to accept a few immigrants from Folsaria.

Koutarou thought of that as a meaningless fight. But Maya frowned at his words.

“Boy, you're calling it 'something like that'... but just how much of our circumstances do you understand?”

Maya had a very irritated look as she stared at Koutarou who didn't properly understand the situation.

“What do you mean?”

“Darkness Rainbow had indeed been created with the intention of returning to our true home. However, after hundreds of years of fighting, we have found more than one objective! We're not in a situation where we can just reconcile because we can return home!”

The reason was the negative inheritance from their hundreds of years long history of fighting. In the past, the only objective had indeed been to return home. However as they fought against Rainbow Heart, they gathered people who wished to accomplish different goals using magic. Just like how Crimson only wished to fight or Purple wanting to revive her lover. Right now, those kind of people were the majority in Darkness Rainbow.

If this had happened when their only purpose was to return home, then everything could be resolved with Elexis taking them to Forthorthe. However, that wouldn't resolve everything for people with other objectives like Crimson and Purple. If they stopped fighting and surrendered, private use of magic would be forbidden and they couldn't accomplish their goal. They had to defeat Rainbow Heart no matter what.

Another problem was that hundreds of years had passed since the fighting started. The chain of hatred that had been created made it impossible to reconcile.

As many of those kinds of problems began to intertwine, Maya couldn't forgive Koutarou for dismissing it all as 'something like that'.

“We will defeat Rainbow Heart and return to our home in a dignified manner as partners of the new system Elexis is creating! We have no intentions of arriving as refugees! We are Darkness Rainbow! Proud magicians!”

“If you want to stop them, then just try, Koutarou-kun! You'll learn the hard way of why they sought power!”

As Maya and Elexis spoke, the six dark magical girls slowly approached. In the current situation, only Theia and Koutarou would be able to put up a fight against them. However, Koutarou had powered down quite a bit, and if they fought he would only end up getting in Theia's way. At this rate, they would lose in an instant.

Part 5

In this certain death situation, Koutarou's directions were to retreat. If they fought they would be annihilated. Breaking through those six and destroying the jamming device Elexis was holding in his hand was next to impossible. So all they could do was run.

“Everyone, let's fall back for now! Even if we fight there's no chance of winning!”

”Of course we won't let you escape! We knew you'd try that!”

However, the moment Purple declared so, automated weapons poured up from the stairs Koutarou and the others had come from. After being caught in a trap, it was clear that they would try to escape... they didn't even need to rely on Green's forecast for that. With their objective being to eliminate Koutarou and the others, they had deployed their forces so that there would be no escape.

“Kuh, at this rate we'll...!”

Koutarou cut down the automated weapons in front of him with a bitter expression on his face. Thanks to the armor, he could deal with the automated weapons with ease when fighting one at a time. But since he was swinging around a normal sword he couldn't reduce their numbers right away and he couldn't open a path to the stairs. Of course, since Darkness Rainbow's magical girls were attacking at the same time, Koutarou and the others were stuck on

defense.

“What's wrong!? Is that all you've got without magical power!?”

“I'm not done yet!!”

Having been looked down on until now, Crimson targeted Shizuka. She wasn't using her laser or cannon and was just attacking Shizuka with her cane which she had transformed into an axe. Crimson strengthened herself with magic and her axe was infused with magic as well. In contrast, Shizuka was fighting her unarmed and without Alunaya enhancing her abilities. As a result, Shizuka had her hands full just avoiding the attacks.

“Maki-chan, please go!”

”I'm counting on you, Yurika!”

Maki and Yurika were working together to fight against Green. Their spell effectiveness was greatly reduced by Elexis' jamming device, so they chose to cooperate to amplify their magic. But even then they could still only control about half of the normal amount of magical power. So they had Maki, who excelled in direct combat to fight against Green in close combat. Since they didn't sent spells flying, the power of her attacks were higher. Moreover, Green was not good in close combat, so in that sense they had a chance to win.

“Navy-san, if you weren't around, then Crimson would!!”

However, Green was well aware of that. So she chose to send some automated weapons onto Maki while she used her spells to attack.

“Uhhh!?”

”Maki-chan!!”

”Mirage Blast!!”

“Kyaaa!?”

”Stand back, Yurika!”

With this style of fighting Yurika was defenseless, so Maki couldn't go to far from her. The two were hurt by Green's spell and were gradually being cornered.

“Oh... even though you familiars have gotten a power down you're still trying

so hard”

”They're not familiars, they're servants”

“Ho-! Guts Ho-!”

”Let's show them the power of haniwas Ho-!”

Kiriha never had special powers of her own. Her strength was mostly born from her sharp mind, so she used her haniwas to cover for the reduced cutting power of her naginata. She was also fortunate that Yellow was more skilled at defense. While she couldn't do much damage with this power down, dodging Yellow's attacks weren't that difficult.

“We're going again, Karama, Korama!”

“We can't complain Ho-!”

“We'll make up for what we lack with courage Ho-!”

Kiriha and the haniwas method for attacking was having Kiriha attack from the front and letting the haniwas attack from blind spots. With the power down, the haniwas couldn't be used effectively for defense, that became their new primary role.

“But there's more than one way to defend yourself... Hedgehog Guard”

However, Yellow was a leader of Darkness Rainbow. Being an expert at defense, she had learned special defensive spells.

“Owowowow, w-we were hit Ho-!?”

“It's spiky Ho-!”

The haniwas attempted to tackle Yellow while she was preoccupied with Kiriha but were repelled by Yellow's defense. Though that wasn't the problem, rather, the barrier was made out of spikes. The haniwas had charged into the spikes and taken damage. Thus, Kiriha and the haniwas began being cornered.

“Harumi, don't go too far away from me!!”

”I'm sorry for making you fight on your own, Sanae-chan!”

”No problem, this is my time to shine!”

Sanae was desperately fighting to protect Harumi. Since Harumi technically couldn't use magic on her own, she returned to being a normal girl once she was cut off from Signaltin. Sanae on the other hand could still use some of her powers, so she was protecting Harumi.

“Come on, it's only going to get harder!”

”Uhh, what a terrible personality”

Sanae was going up against Purple. Adapting to Sanae's weaker power, Purple summoned many departed souls. The normal Sanae would easily be able to defeat one of those departed souls, but the current Sanae couldn't. Sanae was doing her best to prevent Harumi from being attacked and was gradually taking more and more damage.

“Sanae!”

“Gyaaaaoooooo!!”+

That was when Theia, who had realized the danger Sane was in, fired her assault rifle into the crowd of departed souls. Physical attacks had little effect on departed souls, but Theia's rifle had a larger caliber than a rifleman's rifle, and was able to deal some damage. Though if Purple had limited the numbers to improve their power, it probably wouldn't have worked.

“Thank you, Theia”

“Be careful!”

“Ok!”

During this opening, Sanae defeated one of the departed souls and regained her posture. Theia felt relief seeing that, however, the enemy wouldn't overlook her own opening.

“Do you think you have the time to worry about others!?”

”Whoops!”

Theia suddenly jumped backwards. Moments later an orange, yellow and red cloud appeared where she had stood before. Theia was going up against Dark Orange. The cloud so colorful it stung in Theia's eyes just looking at it was made by her. Orange's specialty was to change the properties of things. It was a

dangerous attack where one didn't know what would happen if you came into contact with the cloud.

“You're spells are just so slow you see”

”That's not cute at all!”

Theia had the upper hand in the fight between her and Orange. Theia's equipment was purely scientific, so she was most unaffected by the jamming. Orange mainly used a tricky fighting style, so in a straight up battle of firepower, Theia had the upper hand. However, Theia couldn't finish off Orange.

“Ruth!”

“I'm sorry, Your Highness!”

She had to cover for her allies so she couldn't focus fire on Orange. If Theia had been equipped with Assault Red instead of Command Green, she probably would have defeated Orange by now, but be out of ammo instead.

Ruth who had just been covered, was currently fighting against Blue.

“... Why don't you just give up? With all the skills you're so proud of sealed, you have no chance of winning”

Blue indifferently attacked as she spoke. Her specialty was summoning magic. She could summon demons to attack, or lava from elsewhere and pour it on her opponents. She had very varied attacks. The same could be said for Ruth's normal way of fighting.

“Even if that's the case, a knight will continue to fight to protect her allies. There was never a option to give up to begin with!”

Unlike usual, Ruth was swinging her beam saber around. With her connection to the Blue Knight cut off, she couldn't attack while relying on her unmanned fighters and information network. While she had started to get more skilled with the sword, she was still stronger with her unmanned fighters. With her best techniques sealed off, Ruth was having a hard time.

“... We've won, Elexis”

“I'd be troubled if we didn't. We've spent this much time after all”

Watching over the fighting, Maya and Elexis were convinced of their victory. With Koutarou and the others' abilities sealed they were clearly at a disadvantage and were being cornered by the dark magical girls and the automated weapons. Sensing the flow of things, the live soldiers who had been forbidden from joining in to prevent the loss of manpower, began attacking as well. No matter how they looked at it, victory was guaranteed.

“Damnit, I have to let everyone get away! At this rate we'll only die”

Koutarou desperately repelled the enemy while looking around. He was focused on returning the girls of room 106 home. However, he couldn't see how they could win. All he could see was the girls struggling and the enemies increasing. Koutarou's experience let him know that this was a complete defeat.

“Is it going to end in a place like this!? I still haven't done—”

Koutarou looked away from the humanoid automated weapon for an instant to look over the entire battlefield. That was when the automated weapon thrust its right hand forward into Koutarou's side.

“Guaaa!?”

Having suffered several attacks from enemies, his barrier was hardly working. The claws on the automated weapon easily pierced through the weakened barrier and gouged his flank. Koutarou kneeled from the intense shock and pain. If he could control his spiritual energy he could ease the pain, but that was difficult now. Koutarou could no longer move.

“Koutarou!?”

Seeing that, Theia let out a shout. As she did, the girls of room 106 looked at Koutarou on reflex. And that created a large opening for the enemy.

“Don't look away in the middle of a battle, are you insane!?”

”Kyaaa!!”

The dark magical girls' attacks hit the girls. They hurriedly defended themselves and avoided any critical damage, but they were all knocked to the ground, and couldn't stand up from the impacts. The next attack would most likely be the last. With that, Koutarou and the others would be defeated and Darkness

Rainbow would win. There was no longer anything Koutarou and the others could do.

“Koutarou-kun, it's been months since our first battle... but it seems like I'm finally about to get my first win”

“It's been more than ten years for me you know? I'm glad it happened before I became an old lady”

Elexis and Maya approached the girls. To these two, Koutarou and the others were opponents they were deeply connected to. They wanted to see the end up close.

“... It's our complete defeat, Maya, Elexis. There's nothing we can do now. You guys win”

Koutarou honestly admitted defeat and showed a wry smile. Just like his words suggested, it was the expression of someone that had given up. But seeing that, Elexis stopped dead in his tracks.

“What is it, El?”

”... Those words don't suit him at all. It seems like Koutarou-kun is planning something. Purple-kun, kill them right away”

Elexis felt that Koutarou wasn't speaking what he truly felt. Based on Koutarou's actions and behavior from the past, he would continue to protect his allies until the bitter end. That's why Elexis believed that Koutarou was only saying that to get him to lower his guard.

Damnit, he caught on...

Koutarou clicked his tongue in his mind. Elexis was spot on. Koutarou was trying to overload his armor's generator and cause it to explode. By doing that, the girls of room 106 should be able to escape.

“Understood. This is goodbye, intruders”

The six dark magical girls pointed their canes at Koutarou and the others. In a moment they would each release their specialties and annihilate Koutarou and the others.

“I won't let you!!”

Koutarou forced up his numb body and ran towards Darkness Rainbow's magical girls.

Everyone, make sure you get away!

He would use his body as a shield and blow up the generator to create an opening for the girls to escape. He was desperate to protect the girls. Koutarou knew that it would be difficult to actually pull it off, but he couldn't keep himself from trying anyways.

“What a foolish man... what do you think will come from that?”

Purple sneered at Koutarou. She already knew what he was intending to do, and that Yellow's barrier would be able to block it. That's why Koutarou would simply die for nothing. He would just die a moment before the girls. Purple found that unbearably amusing.

Be grateful, Blue Knight. That you don't have to feel this desire, and that you get to pass away with those precious to you...

Magical power gathered at the tips of Purple's and the others canes. Their magic would be unleashed any moment now. Maya, Elexis and the six leaders of Darkness Rainbow were convinced of their victory. And this victory would lead to victory over Rainbow Heart. The girls were smiling as their desired future was right around the corner.

However, the future they desired so much was washed away by a rain of bullets. They were suddenly brought back into battle.

“Guaa!?”

The bullets were first focused on what was in Elexis' hand and penetrated the jamming device. Elexis almost dropped the jamming device from the shock and held it with his hand. He knew very well what would happen if he lost the device.

“Kyaaa!?”

”W-What's going on!?”

Next the bullets rained down on the six magical girls. For some reason, the bullets easily penetrated Yellow's barrier. Normally that was unthinkable, so the surprised girls stopped their attacking and got out of the way.

“Who's there!? Come out!!”

Since Elexis was attacked, Maya was enraged. She searched for the attacker with her eyes full of fury and hatred. If possible she wanted to kill the culprit with just her glare.

“... You're the same as well, Maya. You always act like an adult full of confidence, but if someone messes with something you care about, you erupt in anger”

“That voice!! Could it be!?”

”It is”

The mysterious attacker appeared in front of Maya. She had a small body and characteristic pig tails. A youthful face, but deeply intelligent eyes.

“Rainbow Nana! My nemesis!!”

Rainbow Nana, she had once been the strongest magical girl in Rainbow Heart, and she was still the topic of a lot of talk. Folsaria's living legend. She was supposed to have retired after taking a serious injury, yet here she was standing in Maya's way again.

Part 6

The moment Nana appeared, everyone related to Darkness Rainbow stopped moving. That was how powerful of an opponent she was. If they overlooked a single one of her actions, they would lose in an instant. Nana was the most dangerous opponent to Darkness Rainbow and she had come out on top of them several times before.

“... I've given the name of Rainbow to Yurika. That's why I'm just Nana now”

”So what about it? What kind of idiot would let their guard down because of that?”

“In truth I can barely use magic on my own”

”Even if that is the case, I won't ease up until the moment you die”

Not missing the opening Darkness Rainbow showed when they stopped

moving, she repeatedly fired the gun in her right hand some more. The bullets fired from this gun were energy bullets made from mixing magical power and spiritual energy. This was normally a gun that gathered and fired magical power, but with her magical power reduced, the spiritual energy generator powering her artificial limbs supplied the gun with spiritual energy to make up for the difference. However as a result it increased the bullets penetration. Both magic and spiritual energy would be required to block these bullets.

“Protection From Soul Energy!”

“Anti Magic Shield!”

Noticing the reason for why the barrier had been penetrated, Purple and Yellow each cast a defensive spell. Purple cast a defensive spell against spiritual energy and Yellow cast a defensive spell against magic. This two layered shield repelled Nana's bullets. The bullets themselves didn't have an impressive amount of energy.

“Don't think we're the same as before, Rainbow Nana!!”

While protected by the defensive spells, Maya charged at Nana. Maya fired her own gun, built into her left arm, at Nana. She got closer, intending to settle the match with the blade in her right arm.

“Then let's try this”

In contrast, Nana rolled something across the floor with a playful expression.

“Oh no!?”

By the time Maya realized what it was, it released a bright flash.

Nana had rolled a flashbang across the floor. Since everyone was focused on Nana, it proved exceptionally effective. Everyone in Darkness Rainbow ended up seeing the flash. Everyone apart from Maya whose mechanical body gave her measures to protect her from flashes and Green who didn't rely on her eyes to fight were all unable to move.

“Everyone, hurry up and regroup!”

Nana left those words behind to Koutarou and the others and ran towards Maya who was rapidly approaching. Even to Nana, Maya was someone she

couldn't lower her guard around.

“Green, you kill the boy and the others!”

”Okay!”

The highly capable Maya would engage Nana while Green would operate the many automated weapons to deal with Koutarou and the others. In this situation that was the optimal way to fight.

“El, what about the jamming device!?”

”It's impossible to maintain all functions! If I bypass the circuit I can keep jamming at least one of them!”

Meanwhile, Elexis was trying to repair the jamming device that Nana had shot. But unfortunately it had taken a lot of damage and recovering all functions was impossible.

“Then make it that dragon!”

”I'm working on it!!”

Elexis shifted all of the jamming onto Shizuka. If Alunaya appeared now everything would be over.

“Speaking with a man? You've changed, haven't you!?”

“That goes both ways!”

Nana's and Maya's battle began. Koutarou wanted to go back up Nana, but he couldn't as most of them were still unable to move. While the jamming had stopped and everyone could use their own powers, they weren't able to start fighting right away. They had to make preparations and injuries needed to be treated.

“Men, leave Green to me! Meanwhile, the rest of you get ready!”

The only one that could move right away was Theia. Normally she'd want to exchange weapons, she was also hurt, but if she didn't stop Green here they would be defeated. Theia fired off her guns as if she was trying to use up all ammunition as she stood in the way of Green.

“It will be impossible for you alone to deal with this many weapons”

”Then let me show you! There's no need to actually win after all!”

Green attacked from the front, and the automated weapons attacked from all sides. Theia was trying to stop them , but she was horribly outnumbered. At this rate, Theia would be unable to surpress the enemy shortly. From now on it was a battle against time.

“Yurika, Aika-san, leave me and Ruth-san for later, heal Sanae and landlord-san first!”

”O-Okay!”

”Kasagi-san, I'll heal you right away!”

Koutarou had those who could move almost right away get healed first. Koutarou and Ruth required time to readjust the system settings and summon their weapons. So healing people like Sanae and Shizuka who had their own powers was more effective.

“Then I'm off to help Theia”

”I'll go get some payback too”

”Shizuka, I'm still being jammed and can't use all of my strength. Don't go overboard”

”And to think my weight is still increasing. Unforgivable!”

Having had their injuries healed by magic, Sanae and Shizuka headed off to help Theia. That relieved Koutarou's worries about Theia, but he still had more he worried about.

“Yurika, will Nana-san be okay? She only just got better, and she can't use as much magic as she could before, right?”

While being healed by Yurika, Koutarou was looking at the battle between Maya and Nana. He was worried for her safety. Not much time had passed since Nana got her artificial limbs, moreover she had less magical power and she had been away from active duty for a long time. Thinking about it normally, the battle with Maya was extremely dangerous.

“She'll be fine”

However, Yurika, who knew Nana, wasn't worried in the slightest. After glancing at Nana for a moment she smiled at Koutarou.

“Nana-san is a genius magical girl”

“But she can't use that much magic now”

Even though she used to be a genius magical girl, she had lost most of her body and her magical power with it. Even if she used a device to heighten what power she had left, she wouldn't reach the same level as she had been before. That's why Koutarou felt like the battle between her and Maya was too dangerous.

“Nana-san had indeed been called a genius magical girl, but that doesn't mean she was a genius at magic”

”What?”

“She's a genius that can use magic”

Strictly speaking, Nana was one of the weaker of arc-wizards when it came to magical power. However, she was skilled at controlling that magical power and could get great effect from small amounts of magical power. Moreover, her flashes of brilliance allowed her to come up with effective ways to use magic, leading to great results. A genius girl using the versatile tool like magic. That's what everyone meant when they called Nana a genius magical girl.

“So please don't worry. That is without a doubt the genius magical girl... Rainbow Nana”

To begin with, if she wasn't like that, she would never have been able to fight against Darkness Rainbow on her own, and bring the fight to a draw. Darkness Rainbow's leaders weren't so weak that they'd lose to someone just because they had an overwhelming amount of magical power. That's why even though she now had artificial limbs and had changed tools from magic to weapons, Nana was far from weak. Yurika believed that while Nana might be weaker than she was before, she was still stronger than anyone else here. Her second name as a genius magical girl was not just for show.

Part 7

Nana had practically lost all of her ability to use magic. Since she couldn't accumulate any magical power in her artificial body, she could only use the magical power her living parts generated as she got it. Moreover, since she had few living parts the magical power she did accumulate was little. Because of that, she could only use the most basic of magic in her current state.

But if her weapon could accumulate magical power, she could make full use of the generation she still had. And if that wasn't enough, she could also use spiritual energy. With that idea in mind, Nana's guns, Over the Rainbow, were made.

The grip of these guns continuously absorbed Nana's magical power and the spiritual energy generated from the artificial limbs generator. When fully charged, the guns had about 15 shots each. Even if she used up all of those, with enough time, she could fire them again. Moreover, she could also use bullets that only consisted of spiritual energy, and while the power was reduced without any magical power, she could continuously fire without fear of running out thanks to the generator. Nana fired bullets with magical power to break through defenses and then only relied on spiritual energy bullets.

“Nanaaaa!!”

“You've gotten ridiculously fast since the last time we met, Maya!!”

Nana rapidly fired spirit bullets, bullets consisting of only spiritual energy, at Maya. This was because a large amount of bullets were required to hit Maya when she was moving so fast. She couldn't use magic bullets, bullets with magical power mixed in, as there was a limit to how many she had.

“It's just perfect to defeat you and that boy, don't you think!?”

”It's certainly troublesome!”

Nana tilted her head to the side, and moments later, Maya's blade passed through where her head had been.

I've fired that many bullets and not a single one has hit!!

Nana had splendidly dodged Maya's attack, but she was marveled by Maya's strength. Nana had a combat mode built into her body, but that was just a secondary mode. Her new body had been made prioritizing her ability to live a

normal life. Maya on the other hand had gotten a body made primarily for combat, and in that regard she exceeded Nana.

“But I have all kinds of things too!”

Nana spun her body around and pointed her left hand towards Maya. As she did a glowing red ball of fire appeared in front of her hand. While small, it was still a fireball spell.

“Magic!?”

”Amplifier!!”

Next Nana made the gun in her right hand shine and a glowing magic circle appeared in front of the fireball. At the same time she ordered the fireball to launch. The fireball was launched at the same speed as her bullets and passed through the magic circle. When it did, the fireball grew one size larger, swelling up into a normal size. When that fireball exploded it would hit a wide area. It should be an effective attack against Maya who moved swiftly.

“Quick Cast – Anti Magic Shield!!”

Sensing danger, Maya suddenly incanted a defensive spell. A small wand was stored in her left arm, and while Maya had lost her ability to accumulate magic she could still use spells, though not in succession.

What is going on!? Nana shouldn't be able to properly use magic!!

Thanks to Maya's defensive spell, Nana's attack disappeared before it exploded. However, instead of attacking, Maya distanced herself from Nana for a moment. Her fighting style up until now had assumed that Nana wouldn't be able to use magic, so she needed to rethink how she would fight.

“I'm surprised... I heard you couldn't use magic anymore”

Maya sent a glance full of both surprise and bitterness at Nana.

Darkness Rainbow had left Nana be because they had determined that she could no longer use magic and had to retire as a soldier. However, what just happened in front of Maya's eyes turned that assumption on its head. She couldn't hide her surprise.

“I can't now either”

”Quit lying. Then what was that Fireball? I don't want to hear some lame excuse of it just being a trick”

“Thanks to all kinds of tools, I'm able to use magic on the same level as a normal person. Well, in that sense it's a trick”

Nana showed off her left arm and gun as she spoke. Actually, by using the power of what was built into her left arm and her gun, she was able to use magic. Maya narrowed her eyes and stared at Nana.

“I see... I did hear a report about your apprentice having a cane that allowed anyone to use magic”

”Correct. I am only amplifying the magical power gathered in the gun. I still can't use magic on my own”

The frame of Nana's left arm had been made by transforming the cane that Koutarou had brought with him from the past world. While the cane could use all kinds of magic, there was little power behind them and there was a need to amplify them. However, Nana couldn't accumulate magical power on her own. That was where her guns, Over the Rainbow, came in. While Nana couldn't accumulate magical power, these guns could. Using that magical power, Nana cast an amplifying spell. With that she could add the guns magical power on top of the cane's magical power, and somehow managed to reach the level of a normal person.

“With that we're roughly equal, huh...”

When it came to the performance of their bodies, Maya was on top, while Nana was on top when it came to magic. In Maya's eyes, there was hardly any difference in their overall capabilities.

“It looks like it”

Nana agreed. At this rate it seemed like the fight would drag on.

“In that case, with allies on my side, I will win!”

However Maya was convinced of her victory. The reason for that was because if need be she could use an automated weapons group. Maya used her communications function to request reinforcements. That was when four

automated weapons gathered to protect Maya.

“... What a coincidence. I have allies too”

“Sorry for keeping you waiting, Nana-san!!”

Fortunately, Nana had allies as well. That was Yurika who had just finished healing the others. Though their positions of magical girl and cooperator had swapped, this was the first time in a year and a half that they worked together.

Thanks to the time Nana had managed to buy, Koutarou and the others had managed to recover. However, the same was true for Elexis, and after finishing adjustments on the jamming device, he boarded his personal mobile weapon and faced off against Koutarou.

“... It looks like the shape has changed again, Elexis”

“If I used the last one, the results would just be the same”

”That makes sense”

”I guess I'd call this Warlord II”

Elexis' mobile weapon was a five meter tall steel giant. This was an improved version of the mobile weapon he had fought with before, and the design was slightly different.

“However... I can't boast too much about the improvements this time around. They're all equipment that Maya had brought. It's all thanks to her”

The design was different because technology using magic and spiritual energy had been incorporated. It used the highest class magic from Darkness Rainbow and spiritual energy technology that Maya had gotten from her negotiations with the underground radical faction, which was also the best technology they had available. The difference in design was slight, but its performance was remarkably different.

“In fact, that's what's more scary. You having allies. The strength of the mobile weapon isn't that much of a problem”

“I've learned after losing to you several times”

”There's a limit to what one man can do”

“Indeed, I am of the same mind right now”

However, Koutarou was more worried about Elexis' ally, Maya, than the strength of his mobile weapon. In the past it had looked like Elexis had allies, but he had been fighting on his own. Yet now he was fighting partnered up with Maya. Koutarou knew better than anyone what cooperation with allies could bring forth. Elexis' mental stability was a clear sign of that.

“It seems like you've changed a little bit as well, Koutarou-kun”

”I haven't changed. This is just borrowed as well”

”Which means that it's extremely dangerous”

”There's a limit to what one man can do after all”

“Hahaha, we're both in a bind aren't we”

“Yeah, it's a sad story”

Koutarou and Elexis drew their swords at practically the same time. Both of them were going to have an upfront battle with swords as they both knew that petty tricks wouldn't work on eahc other.

“Sakuraba-senpai”

”Yes”

Koutarou called out to Harumi in his mind. Her voice responded in no time at all and Signaltin was glowing in his hand.

”Please focus on controlling Signaltin. He's someone who you can't let your guard down around”

”I understand. Good luck, Koutarou-sama”

Harumi's hair glowed silver as she enhanced Signaltin's magical power. Normally she'd want to use the excess magical power to support, but if she did that her control of Signaltin wavered. Going up against Elexis, any carelessness would prove fatal. Harumi could also tell that she needed to focus on controlling the sword.

“Then let's go, Koutarou-kun!”

”It's on, Elexis!”

With those words as their signal, the two of them moved forward. The last time Koutarou had moved first, but this time they moved at the same time. This was proof that Elexis' giant had been improved.

“Confirming enemy mobile weapon's hostile actions. GOL will begin its offensive”

As expected, Koutarou's additional equipment, the Garb of Lord, made the first attack.

“Activating right shoulder laser cannon. Beginning attack on enemy mobile weapon”

After activating the laser cannon, GOL fired on its own. It's fire control system was modelled after Theia, so it made very quick decisions. In a more human expression, it was very impatient.

“Don't fire too much. This is a troublesome opponent”

Going up Elexis, Koutarou not only needed to severely manage his sword, but also his armor's energy. So Koutarou gave the AI a warning.

“... As you wish, my lord”

There was a brief pause before its answer. Koutarou charged towards the giant while thinking that Theia probably would have started sulking.

Part 8

While Koutarou and Elexis were clashing swords, battles were about to start in other places as well. The most hasty of the dark magical girls was of course Crimson. Once she found enemies, she attacked without hesitation.

“I've been waiting for this moment!!”

”You again!?”

Crimson's target was Shizuka. However, unlike before, Shizuka easily warded

off the attack. She was currently in her half-dragon form, so she wouldn't be done in that easily. However, despite her attack failing, Crimson was in a good mood.

“That's more like it! There's nothing fun with fighting weak opponents!”

Crimson didn't actually like Elexis' jamming device all that much. She didn't like the idea of winning after weakening her opponent. To her it was like trying to climb to the top of a mountain but blowing up the top to lower its peak.

When Shizuka turned into a dragon she exceeded the strength of what a human could achieve, which Crimson didn't like, but she at least wanted to fight her half-dragon form. To Crimson who saw fighting as her everything, this was the moment she had long awaited.

“If you're a martial artist, you should understand this feeling too!”

”I like fighting against strong opponents, but I can't enjoy a life or death battle!”

Shizuka unleashed a roundhouse kick while rejecting Crimson's words. Shizuka was doing karate herself, so she liked fighting strong people. However, that was just so that they could test themselves on one another, not for cutting her opponent down. To sum it up, Shizuka liked karate but not using it to kill others.

“I see, that's too bad!! But I won't hold back!!”

Crimson caught Shizuka's kick on the handle of her axe, in other words, her cane, and chanted a spell.

“Quick Cast – Heat Metal!”

“Uwah hot!?”

Only the metallically reinforced parts of the cane, which happened to be where Shizuka's kick had landed, heated up quickly. Crimson's spell allowed her to freely heat up metal, though using it on her own cane lowered its durability, so she couldn't use it too many times. However, when suddenly used in the middle of a close range fight, it was a troublesome attack.

“Geez... magicians really are crazy”

Shizuka hurriedly jumped away and patted the part of her leg that had been

burnt a couple of times. It had only felt really hot, but she hadn't taken any serious damage. Shizuka had the powers of the Fire Dragon Emperor so apart from the sensation, she barely ever took any damage from heat.

“Who's the crazy one... But that's more like it”

Crimson showed a fearless smile. The stronger her foe was, the more joy she felt when winning. She couldn't help but look forward to what would happen in this fight.

Part 9

In contrast to Shizuka's intense battle, Kiriha's battle was progressing a little more calmly. Her opponent was Dark Yellow who specialized in defense and strengthening, and their battle was more one of intellect.

“Kiriha-san was it...? What will you show me next?”

”You've gotten measures against electricity too, so... what should I do...”

Yellow was a magician skilled at defense and strengthening, so both her offensive and defensive powers were very high. Kiriha's attacks had pretty much no effect, while a single shot from the bow Yellow was using would pierce through the haniwas defense. Fortunately, Yellow wasn't all that skilled at fighting. She normally only cast strengthening magic on someone and let them do the fighting.

Kiriha was finding openings and attacked. For example, just before Karama had started by attacking with eye lasers, upon which Korama followed up with an electric attack. Doing that ionized the air and created a path for the electricity to travel through, allowing for an accurate attack at Yellow's feet, which was an area that was hard to guard. It was a clever attack that made up for the fact that electricity rarely moved straight forward in the air.

However, being skilled at defense, an attack used once wouldn't work twice on Yellow. Electrical attacks no longer worked on her so a new method of attack

needed to be found.

“If you're not coming, then I will!”

Determining that Kiriha was having a hard time attacking her, Yellow knocked an arrow on her bow. This bow was her actually her cane that had been transformed but its original power wasn't all that high. However it had been strengthened with magic and now had the power to match a cannon. It was a terrifying attack, but this was the moment Kiriha had waited for.

“Now, do it!”

”Ho-, Yurika-chan's specialty, poison gas attack Ho-!”

”Poison gas isn't very heroic but we can't worry about that in this situation Ho-!”

When Yellow attacked she had to undo part of her barrier. Kiriha had the haniwas analyze the timing of that and waited for this moment.

“Oh no!?”

The moment Yellow fired her arrow, the balls thrown by the haniwas entered her barrier. The balls then began emitting white smoke at a furious pace.

“At this rate I'll lose!”

Yellow was fully protected by her barrier. Looking at that from another perspective, the gas had no way out. At this rate the gas would fill up the area protected by the barrier and she would die. Believing that, she suddenly undid her barrier to get out of trouble. She knew that Yurika was skilled at this kind of attack, so this countermeasure was always in her mind.

“... So I tried doing something like this”

“Kyaa!?”

The next moment, Kiriha flew through the smoke and stabbed at Yellow. Yellow responded by quickly defending herself, but because of the naginata infused with spiritual energy and the surprise attack, she was unable to fully block the attack and she was thrown backwards.

“She fell for it Ho-!”

“Ane-san really is a bad woman Ho-!”

“I-I was fooled... they were just normal smoke grenades, weren't they...”

Yellow hurriedly pulled herself up and glared at Kiriha with disgust. Completely unfazed by that gaze, Kiriha clearly nodded.

“That's correct. I don't have any real poison gas”

Everything had gone according to Kiriha's plans. After forcing Yellow to strengthen her barrier, she filled said barrier with gas. Darkness Rainbow were cautious of Yurika's spells, so Yellow easily accepted that it was poison gas and undid her barrier. After that all Kiriha had to do was charge through the harmless smoke and strike down Yellow. She was completely at Kiriha's mercy as she was made to crawl on the ground.

“... You won't die a pretty death you know”

“Well then, allow me to defeat you quickly to keep that from happening”

Kiriha had an elegant smile as she covered her mouth with a fan, thinking of how she should use her real poison gas, which would only numb its victims.

Part 10

With the connection to the Blue Knight restored, Ruth summoned four small unmanned fighters. She fell back to the rear and gave the fighters information and orders, making the fighters to cooperate and attack the enemy.

“It seems like there's someone like me on their side too”

Facing her was Blue, who specialized summoning magic. She summoned demons and had them fight against her foes, which was very similar to Ruth's fighting style. She had summoned four demons and was having them fight against Ruth's fighters. It was a clash between fighters and familiars.

But what is shaking up the demons? Just what are they so scared of?

Blue was confused that the summoned demons were for some reason scared. They were also repeating a word she couldn't understand. She had never seen demons act like this.

“... Is Vadra... Vadra is attakin agen...”

“Kil... Vadra kil our kind”

”If we don kill fas we die...”

”Scared... is Vadra...”

Ruth on the other hand knew the reason. She had heard the word the demons were repeating before.

“Fatra? Could they be survivors of back then... ?”

Forthorthe and Earth had the same flow of time, but Folsaria and the Nether where the demons came from did not. There were also many demons that had been sent directly from the past Forthorthe to current age Earth. Because of that, there were demons that knew of Koutarou directly, and Fatra, the Blue Knight, became a word for their fear.

“Keep it together! If you don't want to die you have to fight and win!”

However upon being scolded by Blue, the demons began returning to normal. They knew that fighting and winning was the only choice as well. After all, even though they had been thrown to the future and to a different world the Blue Knight had come after them.

“Go!”

“Guuuraaaaaaaaa!!”

“Here they come! Auto reaction, begin the counter offensive!”

Like that, a strange proxy war between Ruth and Blue began. Magic and lasers flew about, and fangs, claws and armor was glowing. The fight was chaotic and nobody could imagine the outcome.

Part 11

To Green who called herself Crimson's partner, Maki was an eyesore. Even though they had become enemies, Crimson was still worried about Maki. This irritated Green to no end. That's why unlike the other girls of Darkness Rainbow, she didn't intend to undo Maki's brainwashing and bring her back. She was going to kill her, right here and now.

“If only you didn't exist!”

Green's hatred was intense. Even Crimson's fight against Maki was just more fuel for her envy. After returning from her fight against Maki, Crimson seemed somewhat lonely. It was a reaction that she had never shown after fighting against someone before, so Green, who was always watching Crimson, could tell right away.

“What are you talking about, Green!?”

”Shut up! Shut up!! I'll kill you right now!!”

Maki didn't understand why Green held a grudge against her. That said, Green had her pride and couldn't reveal the reason either... and that too irritated Green.

“Phantom Blade!”

Green created several blades curved like the crescent moon and attacked Maki. These blades were illusions, a mass of information, but touching them could actually cut you. Green was a master at information-type magic, and the density of information in the blades were enough to make the body think it had been cut.

“Fake Vision!”

To counter this, Maki used her own illusions. Being skilled at mind manipulation, her spell worked directly on the mind and provided fake visual information. It was an effective defense, even against someone like Green who had her forecasts.

“Hmpf, something like this!”

Green shook her head to the left and right and shook the illusion away. But by that time, Maki had escaped from the range of the blades Green had sent flying.

Brandishing her greatsword, Maki was closing in on Green.

“Wind Blade!!”

Maki infused magical power into her blade as she ran and took a big horizontal swing at Green. The blade was infused with wind magic and the attack reached farther than the blade itself.

“How about this!?”

”I won't make— Magic Shield!!”

Even though Green could predict attacks, because she wasn't all that well trained, she couldn't escape an attack covering such a wide area. Having realized that she wouldn't be able to evade the wind even if she dodged the blade, Green quickly cast a defensive spell to protect herself.

“Kyaaa!?”

However, if both were of equal ability, the attacking side had the advantage. Green was unable to fully block Maki's attack, and was sent flying backwards. Seeing her chance, Maki tried to pursue.

“Hah!?”

However, she judged that she would be unable to pursue and jumped back as well. As she did, illusion blades stabbed into the ground between her and Green. In order to protect herself, Green had called her illusion blades back.

“... You're pretty good, Green”

”I'll do whatever it takes to kill you!”

Green had been sent flying by Maki, but she was able to regain her balance midair and landed safely on her feet. Normally she wasn't very good at fighting, but her sense of rivalry for Maki made her stronger. As a result, their strength was equal, and it looked like the fight would be drawn out.

Part 12

With her allies recovering their power, the load on Theia dropped greatly. Thanks to that, Theia was able to focus on her own battle, and the battle was turning in her favor.

“Damnit, you're not cute at all, princess!”

“I have the right to choose who I show my cute side too, and that is not you”

”You're really not cute at all!”

Orange stamped her feet in frustration. It was only natural she would. She had been hurt and her outfit was torn and dirtied all over. Orange liked dressing up in cute outfits, so she was very unsatisfied with her current appearance.

“I'll defeat you right now and listen to your cute voice as you beg for mercy!”

”Do it if you can!”

Theia flashed a fearless smile and slashed at Orange with the heat knife in her hand. Theia's current style of fighting was firing her assault rifle while she closed in to strike with her heat knife.

I have the upper hand now, but this is bad...

Her expression was one of confidence, but Theia was panicking a little on the inside. The truth was that she was almost out of ammo. With her connection to the Blue Knight restored, she could just change the entirety of her Combat Dress, but she would be defenseless while she did so. Orange wouldn't be kind enough not to attack as she changed, and there were also automated weapons and soldiers in the area. Changing her Combat Dress in this situation was suicide. That's why her use of the assault rifle and knife was just an attempt to buy time until she ran out of bullets.

“A girl shouldn't use a violent weapon like a knife! Just imagine being on the receiving end!”

Orange blocked the knife with her cane. Her cane was decorated with expensive jewels and cloth, it was the opposite of Theia's rugged knife. Moreover, whenever she swung her cane she spread around glittering powder. It was as beautiful as diamond dust.

“Which one of us is the violent one! You're the one spreading around the

suspicious powder!”

However, the glittering powder was a product of Orange's magic. Being skilled at spells that changed the properties of things, Orange prepared countless traps to attack Theia. One of which was the glittering powder, which caused chemical burns just by touching it.

“Eeeehh!? Isn't it cute!?”

Sensing that Theia didn't like the powder, Orange turned her cane towards Theia in an exaggerated fashion and spread the powder around.

“I've got you!!”

”Eeehh!? W-What!?”

Theia grabbed both of Orange's wrists and restrained her. She got some of the glittering powder on her body, but now wasn't the time to complain about that. There was something Theia wanted to, and she was prepared to suffer some minor burns to do it.

“Blue Knight! Change Combat Dress to Assault Red!!”

”As you wish, my princess”

And that was to change her dress and replenish her ammo. Before Orange's very eyes, Theia's dress changed from green to red, from command to assault. By the time Orange noticed what that meant, the damage was already done.

“Oh no, I was tricked!?”

”Hahahaha, you were the cute one!”

”Grr!”

With her arms grabbed, Orange couldn't use magic, and the allies around her wouldn't risk shooting her to get to Theia. Thus Theia was safely able to changed her armaments.

Part 13

Sanae was going up against Purple. Sanae's spiritual energy far exceeded human limits, and without proper measures, not even the leaders of Darkness Rainbow had a chance of winning. Due to that, Purple stood out like a sore thumb. She used necromancy, in other words, she used magic that manipulated spiritual energy. She would be able to fight against Sanae with some measures prepared beforehand.

“Now it's my turn, Purple!”

As Sanae ran towards purple, she emitted a glowing aura. Some of the overwhelming amounts of spiritual energy within Sanae's body was leaking out and transforming into light. It was proof that her abilities were interfering with physical space.

“Just how much can you do before the very gates of hell... Activate – Precast Spell – Summon Abyss Gate!!”

”What is this!?”

Sensing something abnormal, Sanae instinctively stopped. The presence of that abnormal something was coming from behind Purple. At first there was nothing there, but a few seconds after Sanae sensed the presence, a black dot appeared. The dot gradually grew larger and turned into a black whirlpool.

“... That is something bad...”

The black whirlpool gradually grew larger and it eventually reached several meters in size. The black dot in the center also grew larger, and to Sanae it already looked less like a whirlpool and more like an accumulation of malice.

“... Why did you bring something like this out? Do you know what this actually is?”

What Purple had summoned was an accumulation of intentions that prioritized itself and denied others. It's scale was much smaller, but this was the same power that Tayuma had come into contact with.

“Oh I know. I opened the gates of hell”

”You don't get it! This is different from normal powers!”

“I do know. At the very least, with this, your powers will cancel each other

out!”

Purple was right. The light around Sanae grew weaker as the whirlpool of malice, the gates of hell, opened. Sanae's power was born from optimistic intentions and a strong vitality. It was the opposite of the power overflowing from the gates of hell. Purple was going to weaken Sanae with the gates of hell, and then finish her off herself.

Purple doesn't get it! If she uses this, she will be dragged into it herself! Just like that creepy old man! I have to hurry and do something!

Sanae recalled Tayuma as she stared at the gates of hell. Tayuma was the kind of man who wouldn't hesitate to blame all of his misfortune on others. While it was smaller scale, if she continued to curse others, Purple wouldn't have a nice future.

“You will die here! You will be killed by my hands!!”

”... If Purple falls unconscious, will that go away too...? I don't know, but I'll at least give it a try!!”

Determination burned in Sanae's eyes as she ran towards Purple. She wasn't thinking of defeating Purple. She wanted to protect her friends and at the same time save Purple. Sanae's meeting and parting with the ghost woman that had attacked her led her to this conclusion. And that kindness would become a great power to combat the gates of hell. Sanae believed that love was all.

The One Without a Future

Part 1

Sunday, September 19

Thanks to Nana destroying Elexis' jamming device, the battle with Darkness Rainbow was practically even. However, because of that, if just one person were to fall, that would tip the scale, and from that point on the entire balance would be disrupted. Both sides had accumulated plenty of damage and exhaustion, so that time was approaching by the minute.

The first thing to alter the situation was the battle between Shizuka and Crimson. They both had a high attack power, so they used up their stamina and took more damage than the rest.

”Shizuka, we're almost out of magical power! We have to finish this!”

”I guess it can't be helped! Uncle, we'll settle this with the next move!”

Normally, Shizuka probably wouldn't lose against Crimson. To defeat Shizuka when she wielded the Fire Dragon Emperor's powers, a large-scale weapon would be required. However, knowing that, Elexis couldn't let her move freely and had performed some emergency repairs on the jamming device that Nana destroyed and had it continue to jam as much of Shizuka's power as it could. As a result, the battle between Shizuka and Crimson was progressing evenly until they reached this point. Shizuka's stamina and Alunaya's magical power were reaching their limits. They would need to settle this right away.

“So she's going for the finish... well of course she would, I'm in this state after all”

Sensing from Shizuka's appearance that their next clash would be their last,

Crimson showed a happy smile. Crimson was in a similar situation, and she'd run out of magical power after firing off one or two more major spells. Normally one wouldn't smile in a situation where victory or defeat was unclear. However, this kind of borderline fight was perfect for testing and improving yourself. This was exactly what Crimson desired, and she couldn't help but enjoy it. Of course, if Shizuka was going to settle this with her next attack, she'd take her on from the front.

“It's on, Crimson!”

”Just the way I like it, Shizuka!”

The two of them moved forward at the same time. They were both aiming to close in and unleash a powerful attack to defeat their opponent. However, since both of them knew what the other was planning, charging in without a plan was foolish. So the two of them fired off some attacks to limit their opponent's movements as they closed in on one another.

“Haaaaaaaaaa!!”

Shizuka grew dragon claws and rendered the air with her right hand. As she did, blades of vacuum were created by her claws and flew at Crimson.

“Explosion!!”

In response, Crimson used her explosion spell. The spell and the blades of vacuum clashed between the two and created a large explosion.

The shockwave from Crimson's spell attacked Shizuka. However, Shizuka's

vacuum blades cut through the shockwave and greatly lowered its effect. As a result, only some practically harmless explosive flames remained between the two, and both girls jumped through the flames without any hesitation.

“It's over!! Ooooooo!!”

Shizuka opened her mouth wide in the middle of the flames. As she did, powerful heat energy overflowed from within. This was the strongest attack Shizuka could use in her current state. Plasma Breath. It was a breath of flames so hot the flames turned into plasma.

“Infernal Fireeeee!!”

Crimson pointed her cane forward and spoke out a familiar incantation. Being specialized in energy-type attacks, this was the most powerful of the spells that Crimson could use. It was a simple spell that unleashed vasts amount of magical power in an instant and converted it into heat energy, yet its power was very high. It was a perfect fit for its name.

When the flames from the explosion cleared, the two were a few meters away from one another. And their most powerful attacks were just about to be unleashed. In this situation they had no choice but to fire. If they didn't, they would die.

Their final attacks clashed and created a large explosion. The power was terrific. Even with most of the energy offset, it was still enough to destroy a part of the solid wall of Sariachal, and shake the entire castle. If their attacks hadn't clashed like this, the castle most likely would have been destroyed.

The two were right next to the explosion, and were swept away by the shockwave. They were both knocked down onto the stone floor and stopped moving. It was a fierce double knockout.

Part 2

Ruth and Blue were directly affected by the shockwave. The two were fighting

very close to Shizuka and Crimson, thus they were both hit by the shockwave, but because of their positioning, Ruth took more damage.

“Alert message, first waist motor damaged, left shoulder's shock absorber has encountered an operating error—”

“L-Leave the reporting for later! Make me move right away!”

”As you wish, my lady”

The effect on Ruth herself was negligible. She had been shocked by the blast and her ears were ringing. That was the extent of it. However, the damage to her armor on the other hand was quite large. She was wearing a powered armor like Koutarou, and it had high defense and mobility. However, damaged by the shockwave, several of the internal devices had stopped working and Ruth couldn't move. The armor was too heavy for her to move with just her own strength.

“... I've won!”

Compared to Ruth, Blue who had been a bit further away from the explosion hadn't taken a lot of damage. She wasn't completely unharmed, though she and her familiars could still move. Because of that, Blue, who rarely ever showed much emotion, had a very clear smile on her face. In this battle of attrition she had gotten her chance to win.

“You guys get the fighters!”

Blue had her four familiars stall the small fighters while she targeted Ruth.

“Titan Fist!!”

Blue used her specialty, summoning magic, to attack Ruth as she tried to stand up. Summoning magic wasn't only for summoning creatures. And this time she had summoned a huge rock. The massive rock summoned above Ruth fell down as it was pulled on by gravity.

“Oh no, emergency deployment of the distortion field!”

”Alert message, the energy pool has not recovered. The distortion fields strength will be 30% or less of its usual level”

”It's still better than getting hit directly!”

“As you wish, my lady. Deploying distortion field”

Moments after Ruth noticed Blue's incantation, the massive rock crashed into the barrier. It was a simple move that consisted of simply dropping a rock, but the power the falling rock had built up was terrific. It wasn't something a weakened barrier could block, and after the rock crashed into it, the barrier collapsed and vanished. This was the kind of power you'd expect from a spell with this name.

“Did it work!?”

The next moment, Ruth was sent flying. However, that wasn't because she had been hit by the rock. She had deployed her barrier diagonally to make the rock push her to the side. The barrier collapsed immediately after that, so Ruth's quick wit had just barely saved her.

“You think you can take it easy!?”

However, Blue wasn't done with her attacking.

“Ice Storm!!”

”Kuh!?”

The next spell was a rain of ice shards. Ruth's armor had used up all of its energy to block the previous attack, so all she could do was protect herself with her beam sword.

“Guh, Aahhh!!”

However, blocking all of the shards raining down on her with just a single sword was impossible. Ruth put up a good fight, but being struck by ice shards from all directions, she lost consciousness.

Part 3

With Shizuka and Ruth falling, Koutarou and the others got very disturbed.

Especially Theia, Ruth's childhood friend.

“Ruth!? Curse you, Blue!!”

Theia was in the middle of a battle with Orange, yet when Ruth was defeated, her focus turned to Blue. And she began attacking Blue with her beam rifle.

“I'll have you pay for harming my vassal!!”

She ignored Orange who was in front of her to attack Blue. As someone who stood above others, that might have been a major error in judgment. However, if left be, Blue might finish off Ruth. That's why Theia attacked Blue, aware that it was a mistake. Theia had decided to live together with Ruth, so the decision to abandon her was never an option to begin with.

“Kyaaa!? Y-You guys, protect me!!”

Having been attacked from an unexpected angle, the beams fired from the rifle easily pierced through Blue's barrier. In response, she hurriedly recalled her familiars and sent them towards Theia. If she was attacked again in this condition she would be taken out.

“Nonsense!!”

However, Theia's Combat Dress was Assault Red, the mode with the highest attack power. She blew away Blue and the familiars in the way with her main armament twin cannon and her multi launching missile system.

“Misile, Misile, Vadras misile”

“Nooo, scare, scareee!!”

“Kyaaaa!!”

While the familiars were distracted by the missiles they were sniped by the cannon. They lost their bodies made from magical power and were forcibly returned to their own world. Blue was then attacked by the missiles that had gone around the familiars. While she had been able to avoid some of the missiles through a quick spell, she couldn't avoid the last shot. Blue was sent flying from the missile and lost consciousness. The only reason she hadn't died instantly was because the place she had been hit had been good, and because of the defenses of her outfit.

“I'm your opponent!! You really aren't cute at all!! I won't forgive you even if you apologize now!!”

Orange who had been ignored by Theia was getting really upset. In her pursuit of cuteness, there was nothing Orange hated more than being ignored. That's why she decided to use spells she normally never used.

“Decrease Oxygen!!”

This spell was a simple one that reduced the amount of oxygen within its effective area. However in contrast to its simplicity, it was a very dangerous spell for humans.

Humans inhaled oxygen and had it circulate through their bodies. Just changing the density a little was enough to make them sick and lose consciousness. And until that happens there were barely any symptoms. That's why Theia lost consciousness without even realizing she had been attacked.

“Seriously, how rude”

Despite it being a simple and powerful spell, Orange normally never used it. The reason being that it was too plain and uncute. Orange's desire was to pursue cuteness. This spell worked against that desire. It was a spell she only used when truly angry.

Part 4

Almost around the same time Theia collapsed, another battle was about to reach its conclusion. That was the battle between Maki and Green.

“Crimson!?”

With her future forecast, Green had noticed Crimson falling immediately before it happened.

“I don't have the time to do this!”

However, Green was in the middle of a battle against Maki and couldn't go help Crimson. While dodging Maki's greatsword, Green grew more irritated by the second.

“What are you on about, Green!?”

“Shut up, it's all your fault!!”

Green threw her irritation towards Maki, the source of it. Green didn't like Maki. In the last battle, Crimson had gone out to save Maki and come back hurt. When they had fought against Koutarou and the others, and retreated, Crimson said she had fought against Maki. Crimson clearly felt like Maki was more than just allies in Darkness Rainbow. Even more strongly than towards Green. This irritated Green to no end, and amplified her hostility towards Maki.

“Crimson, No!!”

As Crimson's and Shizuka's last attacks clashed, Green completely lost her composure. She had to run towards the collapsed Crimson, that was all that was in her head.

“What? Kasagi-san!?”

“Move out of the way, Navyyy!!”

When Maki heard the explosion, she noticed the state Shizuka was in. However, with Green charging towards her before she could get an accurate grasp of the situation, she had to focus her attention to Green. If Maki had accurately understood the condition of Shizuka and Crimson, she probably would have acted differently.

“Mirage Blast!”

“Green's been acting strange for a while now... but with this!!”

Thanks to her future forecast, Green was very good at defending herself, and she focused around counter attacks. But in contrast, her forecasts became more inaccurate when she herself started attacks because she interfered with the future. And right now that was exactly what was happening. There were far more openings in Green's offense and defense than normal. Maki wouldn't overlook those as she dodged the flying ray of magic and swung down her

greatsword.

“Don't get in my way! Why are you always, always, always in my way!!”

Green did her best to try and protect herself, but neither her evasion or defensive spell would make it in time. Her physical strength wasn't all that high.

“Don't take my Crimson all for yourself!”

“Green, why—”

In that moment, Maki's greatsword struck Green. The blade of the sword was made from magical power, so the instant it hit, the energy was released and sent Green flying.

“—can you feel so much towards Crimson, but not towards others? Could your eyes not see any other future...?”

Green fell down and remained unmoving. Though she had won the battle, Maki's expression was far from bright. She couldn't help but feel sad that Green had been able to break free from her shell of loneliness, just like she once had.

Part 5

The battle between Sanae and Purple was a very intense one. Purple's necromancy used spells to manipulate spiritual energy, so in a straight up competition of strength, Sanae would most likely win as she didn't need to go through magic. However, from the moment Purple opened the gates of hell, the outcome became unclear. Sanae's spiritual energy was being counteracted by the malice overflowing from the gates, and reduced her overall strength.

“Purple, if you fight using something like that, something bad will happen to you!! Hurry up and close that gate!!”

Normally Sanae used a bow and arrow made from spiritual energy to fight, but right now she was fighting in close combat with spiritual energy focused into her fists and feet. If she sent an arrow flying, its power would drastically weaken

from the influence of the gates of hell. So, Sanae decided to use close combat instead.

“I don't mind holding back if you close it!!”

”Don't make a fool of me, I only need to kill you right now and that will be it!!”

Purple's way of fighting remained unchanged. She summoned departed souls and sent them at Sanae, and while Sanae was being kept busy, she herself cast her own spells. However, the gates of hell made Purple stronger and Sanae weaker. As a result, Purple was in overall strength, on par, or above, Sanae.

“Like I said, you can't do that, why don't you understand!!”

”You're the one who doesn't understand! The depths of this desire!”

Even more, Purple was gradually gaining more strength. The gates of hell absorbed Purple's malice and grew bigger, and the power that overflowed from the gates increased, making Purple even stronger. Sanae was getting anxious about that. However, that wasn't because Purple was getting stronger, but that she would be ruined.

“What can I do to make you understand!?”

Sanae struck the oncoming departed soul as she thought of a way to try and persuade Purple. Since Purple had summoned two of them, Sanae spun her body around and kicked the one soul into the other one behind it.

“Gaaaaa, aaaa”

Sanae had infused quite a bit of spiritual energy into her attack, but it hadn't been enough to defeat the departed souls. Purple's increase in power made the departed souls stronger as well. And it wasn't just the departed souls attacking. While Sanae was occupied with the departed souls, Purple had her chance to attack.

“Soul Energy Strike!!”

The spell controlling spiritual energy created a purple light. However, within seconds it had turned from purple to black. This was because of interference from the gates of hell. With it, the effect of the spell changed as well. An offensive spell that slammed spiritual energy into its target turned into a dark

spell that devoured the soul of its victim. Not only did the power change, but its effect as well.

“I'm telling you that you can't!!”

Sanae focused all of her spiritual energy to protect herself as she desperately called out to Purple. Purple herself wasn't aware, but her soul was experiencing a similar reaction as her magic. Being able to see auras, Sanae could see Purple's soul change color. And that was what Sanae had been anxious about.

How do I stop Purple!? At this rate, she will devour her own soul!!

The current Purple now resembled the female ghost she had once fought before. Sanae didn't want Purple to end up the same way she did. She wanted to save her soul from ruin somehow.

”... Young lady, can you hear my voice?”

”Eh!?”

That was when a man's voice reached Sanae's ears from somewhere. However, that wasn't as sound, but as spiritual waves.

“W-Who are you!? Where are you!?”

Sanae somehow managed to block Purple's attack with a shield of spiritual energy, and looked around for the owner of the voice she heard. That was when the voice called out to here again.

”Here. I'm right next to you now”

The owner of the voice had gotten up right next to Sanae. However, his body was translucent. It was a ghost with the appearance of a young man. He moved alongside Sanae as she fought against Purple and continued talking to her.

”I want to borrow your power”

”Uncle, it's dangerous here! You'll get sucked in so run away!”

Sanae urged the male ghost to run as she fought against Purple and the departed souls. Regardless of who this ghost was, nothing good would come from standing so close to the gates of hell. In Sanae's eyes he looked like a proper ghost, so she truly wanted him to escape.

”I'm afraid I can't. I have to save Marina, the girl who's calling herself Purple”

“What do you mean!?”

”She is my woman, and she has been desperate to revive me after I died. However, I don't want to be revived through the sacrifice of countless people. We would never be happy if that happened”

Even if Purple, Marina, sacrificed countless lives to revive him, Kai, he would always feel an immense guilt over those lives. That's why Kai didn't think they'd be able to live a happy life like that. It would only be the beginning of another tragedy.

“That's why you want to stop her, right?”

”That's right. But my voice won't reach her now. That's why I want to borrow your strength”

”Stop running around!! Just die, little girl!!”

The current Purple couldn't even see her lover. She was so obsessed with trying to kill Sanae that she never even bothered to think of who that spirit floating besides her might be. If he was caught up in one of Purple's attacks and disappeared, she probably wouldn't even notice.

Ever since Kai had lost his life, he had always been calling out to Purple. However, because she was being dominated by her strong sense of loss, his voice never reached her ears. She was so fixated on her wish to live a happy life with a revived Kai that she never even sensed the presence of the real one.

”I want you to carry my voice to her. If my voice reaches her, I'm sure she'll understand!”

Kai only had a single wish. He wanted to save Purple, Marina, his beloved, from ruin. He had appeared before Sanae with only that on his heart.

“Okay, I'll give it a try!”

Kai's wish was something Sanae could understand as well. She greatly sympathized with the simple desire of wanting to save his beloved. That's why she didn't hesitate to cooperate.

”If everything goes well, the gates of hell might be closed with your power”

”You're right, let's give it our best, uncle!”

”Yeah!”

If Kai's words reached Purple, her negative feelings might grow weaker, which in effect should weaken the gates of hell as well. If that happened, Sanae could pour her positive spiritual energy into the gates to close it. This was the correct decision both in terms of feeling and in terms of strategy.

Part 6

After defeating Theia, Orange was able to move freely. So she stopped moving for a moment to think of what would be the most effective to do.

Uhm, should I finish off the fallen enemies, wake up Crimson-chan and Blue-rin, or go help someone...?

The first options that popped into her head were to kill the enemies that were knocked out, wake up her fallen allies or back up one of her allies having trouble. She surveyed the hall to determine who she might help.

“Yellow-chan should be able to go on for a while even if she can't win. Maya-yan and the young master should be fine on their own. That leaves GreGree and Purple, then maybe GreGree?”

Out of the many battles, Orange believed Green was in the most danger. She was getting oddly heated up and frantic about killing Maki. It also seemed like Green's greatest weapon, her future forecasts, weren't working properly. And most of all, the current Green wasn't cute at all. So Orange decided to go give her back up.

“Geez, you're such a handful GreGree... wait, huuuh!?”

However, that was when Orange noticed something. Because that was such a major problem, she gave up on giving Green backup and called out to Purple with a pale expression.

“Purple, this strange!! That uncute girl with glasses isn't here!!”

”What!?”

“Orange noticed that Clan wasn't present. She had definitely been here when Koutarou and the others infiltrated the castle. Her presence had been confirmed with magic. However, when their battle on the third floor began she had gone missing. If she hadn't the outcome would be developing differently. Clan had vanished somewhere between the underground aqueduct and the third floor, and she should have some reason for it.

“Orange, the glasses girl is after the controller!”

”I see, we were tricked!! These guys are all decoys!!”

Clan was missing because she was after the controller that controlled all of the automated weapons to be used in the war. If the controller was taken over while Koutarou and the others kept the leaders busy, the battle would end.

“They've caught on!! Hurry up, Clan!!”

“I understand!”

On the other end of Koutarou's communication device, Clan sped up her hacking progress. Speed was more important than carefulness now.

Darkness Rainbow had their future forecasts. That's why Clan followed Kiriha's instructions, and after finding the controller, she simply waited for time to pass for a while. Since Green could only see the close future with her forecasts, if she hid herself and did nothing, Green wouldn't notice anything abnormal within the castle. After Koutarou and the others battle had started, Green wouldn't have the room to use her forecast for anything other than the battle in front of her, leaving Clan open to move.

“Orange, hurry up to the laboratory! Get them off the controller!”

”Okay, I'm on my way!!”

Orange understood the importance of the automated weapon's controller very well. And currently, she was the only one that could move about freely. If she didn't stop Clan, they would lose the war against Rainbow Heart.

“I won't let you, Orange!”

”Navy-chan!?”

However, Maki stood in Orange's way. Since Orange had given up on helping Green, Maki had come out victorious.

“Don't be such a bully, Navy-chan!!”

”I won't let you go any further!”

Orange reluctantly readied her cane and faced off against Maki. If she didn't hurry up and defeat her, Darkness Rainbow would be ruined. From their advantage, they were now experiencing a major crisis that could overturn everything.

Part 7

Sanae's and Kai's plan was simple. First, Sanae would pour her spiritual energy into Kai, to allow him to have a physical voice. In that state, Kai would approach Purple, while Sanae headed towards the gates of hell. Kai would convince Purple, and Sanae would close the gates.

“Let's do this, uncle!”

”I'm counting on you!”

As Sanae poured her spiritual energy into Kai, his figure grew clearer. Eventually, his soul was dense enough that he could be seen with human eyes, and as a side effect his voice could be heard as well.

“Wha!?”

This surprised Purple. Anyone would be surprised by their dead beloved suddenly appearing before them in the middle of a battle. This was completely unexpected even to the calm, composed and prudent Purple.

“Thank you, young lady! Now let's act according to plan!”

”Yeah, good luck, uncle!”

Sanae and Kai split up according to plan. Sanae headed to the gates of hell and Kai headed to Purple. They both had their own missions to accomplish.

“It's all this things fault!”

Sanae sent her spiritual energy towards the gates. If she weakened the power of the gates even a little, the dark powers flowing into Purple would decrease, making it easier for Kai's voice to reach her. And if Kai's voice reached her, Purple's malice would decrease, weakening the gates.

“Marina, just stop this! Even if you do this, we can't be happy!”

Having run up to Purple, Kai desperately appealed to her. This was his wish that he wanted to tell her, but never could. Now was the time to let Purple know.

“You're lying! If I revive you, we can be happy! We'll marry, have a child and raise it together, we'll definitely be happy, right!?”

Purple was stubborn. Even if Kai himself denied it, what had supported her up until now was her desire to revive him and live a happy life. She couldn't accept something that would break the very foundation of her support.

“Just how many lives do you intend to sacrifice for mine!?”

”As many as it takes! I don't care how many it takes if it will revive you!”

“Don't be stupid, Marina!! Amongst those people, how many do you think will be like us!? How many people like us do you intend on creating!?”

That was the core of Kai's wish. There was no point if reviving Kai created countless people with the same circumstances as they had. Even if Kai and Marina were to marry, the ever growing chain of malice would only bring even more misfortune. The families of those sacrificed might come for revenge. Or they might be after Marina's revival spell. After defeating Rainbow Heart, Kai and Marina could never be happy in a world ruled by the strong. They would live their lives in a sea of blood. Kai couldn't imagine that kind of life would be a happy one.

“I got it!”

“You finally understand, Marina!?”

”Kai, you're being controlled by that girl, aren't you!? Right!? Just wait, Kai, I'll kill that girl right now and set you free!!”

“Marina!!”

Purple couldn't object to what Kai was saying. He was correct, and she knew it in the bottom of her heart. But even then, she couldn't accept it. She wanted to revive Kai, and she couldn't let the years she spent for that cause go to waste. She also couldn't accept that Kai himself rejected her thoughts.

That's why she looked for an escape, and found it in Sanae controlling Kai. The Kai that loved her wouldn't reject her opinion. Yet since he was, it must have meant that he was ordered to do so by Sanae. Sanae must have bent and twisted his will and used him like a tool. Thinking like that, Purple was able to continue living like she believed without admitting her mistakes.

“I love you, Kai!! I will destroy all enemies and revive you!!”

”Stop it, if you go any further you'll—”

Kai abruptly lost his body. Purple's malice grew stronger, and with it, the gates of hell grew stronger as well. Purple's weakness of not wanting to listen to Kai's words any more erased his physical body and sealed his voice away.

“Kyaaaaaaaaa!!”

And the gates of hell that had grown stronger, attacked Sanae who had been trying to close it. The chaotic malice flowing from the gates flowed back into Sanae's soul through her spiritual energy, and robbed her of her consciousness.

“Fufufu... I won't let anyone get in the way... I will destroy everything and revive Kai... fufufufu, ahahahahaha!!”

Going against Sanae's and Kai's hopes, Purple's malice and the dark power grew stronger. Purple was planning on destroying anyone who get in her way. First was Clan. For Purple and Kai to live happily, they would first have to win the war. They had to rob the lives of many.

Part 8

Purple ran out of the hall to go kill Clan. Because Purple had been far from normal when she fought Sanae, Koutarou sensed that Clan was in danger and wanted to chase after her. However, his enemy wouldn't let him do that.

“You're opponent is me, Koutarou-kun!”

”Elexis!”

Elexis' giant stood in Koutarou's way. He had been fighting against Elexis all this time, but he still hadn't been able to win. The new giant that had been enhanced with magic and spiritual energy technology was on a different level from before. Moreover, there were many automated weapons around the giant. Even with the power of Signaltin and GOL, he wasn't someone that could be defeated so easily.

“You should know that Purple won't get out of this in one piece as well!”

Koutarou held Signaltin with both hands and slashed at Elexis' giant.

However, Elexis' gigantic sword blocked Signaltin, and the beam shotguns equipped on both shoulders fired at Koutarou.

“Of course! We are fighting aware of the risks! We're trying to change the world, so there's no way we'd stop because we're afraid it's dangerous!!”

”Eei!!”

Koutarou blocked the beam shotguns with GOL's barrier and fell back for a moment. As he did, a powerful bolt of electricity assaulted the giant. It was an offensive spell cast by Harumi. She had been assisting Koutarou all this time.

“You don't care what happens to them!?”

”That's why we're fighting!! That is their wish after all!!”

However, Harumi's bolt was diffused and disappeared. Several of the automated weapons gathered in front of the giant and worked together to form a barrier. Not only was the giant improved, but RTS, the system that allowed the automated weapons to work together, had been improved as well. As a result, while the giant on its own might not compare to Koutarou, with the group of automated weapons with him, they were not inferior to Koutarou. Defeating that giant right now and chasing after Purple was difficult.

Moreover, many of the girls of room 106 were unable to follow after Purple for the same reason. Crimson, Blue and Orange had fallen, but Orange, Yellow and Maya were still present, and with the many soldiers and automated weapons they had with them, they weren't foes so easily defeated.

“Not good, at this rate Clan-san will be defeated and we can't stop the war!”

Yurika who was in charge of this battle started panicking. Clan wasn't all that good at direct combat, and moreover she was focused on hacking the controller device. Purple on the other hand was different from her usual self, and had some sort of alien power to her. If Clan was attacked by her, the chances of her losing were high, and even if she didn't lose, her hacking would be very delayed. Either way, the chances that Rainbow Heart would lose were high.

“Now that it's come to this we can't get hung up on appearances! Yurika-chan, leave this place to me and go after Purple!”

In this dangerous situation, Nana was going to take on the enemy on her own and have Yurika chase after Purple.

“But Nana-san, you can't face Maya-san on your own!”

Yurika and Nana were working together to face off against Maya. Like Elexis, Maya had many automated weapons with her and they were only just able to fight her with the two of them. That's why Yurika was very reluctant to leave Nana alone.

“Nana, it looks like your apprentice understands the situation well”

Maya sneered at Nana. Not even a genius like here could take on Maya and a group of automated weapons. Maya believed that the only one that might have been able to do so was Nana back when she was a magician.

“I actually have an ace up my sleeve”

Nana dropped her shoulders as she smiled wryly. As she did, she called up the artificial limbs' computer.

“An ace up your sleeve you say?”

Maya's eyes narrowed. Her experience told her to be very cautious when Nana showed this kind of expression, or she would face something horrible.

“It's not something I really want to do though... Release final safety device”

“A release code is necessary to execute that instruction”

“Magical Girl Rainbow Nana, Radiant Angel”

“Code confirmed, releasing final safety device”

Immediately after Nana gave that instruction to her computer, her body began glowing in seven colors of light. The light was flowing out from her body and the glow got brighter as time passed.

“... That's your ace?”

”Yes”

”That's awfully flashy”

”That's one of the reasons why I didn't want to do it”

Nana's body had three limiters placed on it.

The first limiter kept her body's capabilities on the same level as a normal human, and this limiter was released when she moved over to combat mode.

The second limiter was to keep her from using more power than necessary to avoid damaging her frame. This was a limiter Maya had as well, and both of them had already released it.

The final limiter was the final safety device that Nana just released. This safety device was set so that her artificial limbs wouldn't kill her. If she moved too fast or used too much spiritual energy, the living parts of Nana's body would take a lot of damage. Depending on the circumstances she might even die, thus a limiter was necessary. That was just how much power Nana's new body had.

And Nana had now removed all limiters. She abandoned her own safety so that Yurika could chase after Purple. The seven colors of light overflowing from her body was proof of that. If she remained in a perfectly human looking state, cooling, intake and exhaust wouldn't make it in time, so several parts of her body opened up, and that was where the light was leaking out from.

“Yurika-chan, go! I'll do something about this!”

”O-Okay! I'll leave the rest to you, Nana-san!”

The exhaust made Nana's hair flutter and the seven colored lights lit up her appearance. The strong determination in Nana's eyes reminded Yurika of when Nana had fought against Darkness Rainbow a year and a half ago. She had faced her battle with the same expression she had now. And she had returned victorious though seriously hurt. The memories of that pushed Yurika forward. Nana would win. Yurika held that belief firm as she left the hall and chased after Purple.

“I see... so it seems your apprentice was the one that needed to be worried about”

Maya did nothing as Yurika left despite knowing what she was planning on doing. There was only one reason for that. If she took her eyes off the Nana in front of her for even a second, she believed she would be defeated. Maya carefully observed Nana while increasing the output of her own generator and releasing an indigo light of her own.

The generators built into Maya's and Nana's artificial limbs let out roars as they began shining. The roaring generators showed each of their fighting spirits.

“You're wrong, Maya. You don't know how amazing Yurika-chan is”

”Amazing? That coward? She's certainly an amazing coward...”

Maya didn't have much of an opinion of Yurika. She had only been a hindrance in her battle with Nana, and she didn't stand out all that much when they fought before.

“... Maya, you know that Yurika-chan is my apprentice right?”

“Of course I know since I kidnapped her. It seems like she was your cooperator at first”

”How much time do you think has passed since I first met Yurika-chan?”

”Since she became an arc-wizard, she must have spent at least five years training. It's been over a year since she first succeeded your role, so seven perhaps?”

It had taken Maya four and a half years to train up Maki as her successor so these numbers were accurate. It was a very logical conclusion.

“You'd think so right? However, it hasn't even been three years since I first met Yurika-chan”

“Impossible!? You're saying that she became an arc-wizard in that amount of time!?”

Maya's eyes shot open wide in surprise. If it hadn't even been three years since they first met, then her training period had been even shorter than that of Nana's. In other words, Yurika had been faster than Nana who was called a genius. Maya knew just what that meant, but her feelings denied it.

“That's right... Yurika-chan only spent about a year in training. Moreover, she

was too old to start training at 14 years. Yet Yurika-chan became an arc-wizard. Even with her cowardly nature, the higher ups of Rainbow Heart couldn't help but admit Yurika-chan's talent”

“It can't be...”

However it rang a familiar bell for Maya as well. Up until now, Yurika hadn't really played a big part overall, but she would sometimes use surprisingly large spells or clever strategies. Such as summoning a higher existence or tormenting Maki with clouds of poison and acid. Those weren't accidents, but rather glimpses of Yurika's talent that hadn't fully come out into the spotlight. Sensing that, Maya felt a chill run down her spine.

“But it is. The real genius is Yurika-chan. However she was missing love and courage, so you couldn't see her amazingness”

Regardless of how strong power one had, without something to protect and the desire to continue to protect it, it was simply a waste of talent. Yurika didn't have the heart to make full use of her wonderful talent. The weakness of her heart kept her talent hidden.

“And this year and a half trained Yurika-chan's heart. Right now she had plenty of love and courage. I can declare this loud and clear, Maya. There will come a day where Yurika will be called the strongest arc-wizard in history”

The many battles up until today had trained Yurika and allowed her to acquire love and courage. As a result, the talent that had been hidden within Yurika began awakening. And once all of her talent blossomed, Yurika would become a magical girl that would surpass even Nana. Nana was convinced of that.

Part 9

Koutarou's and the others priority wasn't to defeat the leaders of Darkness Rainbow. Instead it was to prevent the clash between Darkness Rainbow and Rainbow Heart. For that sake, the most efficient method was to seize control of

the controller for the automated weapons. In order to do that, Kiriha's plan was to use Koutarou and the others as decoy while Clan found the controller and hacked it.

Of course, a counter measure for Green's future forecast was necessary, so Clan hid herself using her own stealth technology while Ruth displayed a hologram of Clan walking with Koutarou and the others. And after Clan found the controller, she would remain passive while keeping herself hidden for a while. Once Koutarou's and the others battle against Purple and the others began, Green would focus her forecasts on the battle and wouldn't have the time to focus on surveying the castle. Once the battle began, Ruth would casually remove the hologram without anyone noticing. Not having Clan do anything was unnatural, and that was more likely to be noticed than if she wasn't present at all.

Clan began taking action when her sensor picked up the sounds of battle. After taking down the guards, Clan began her hacking. From this point on, there wouldn't be anyone to protect her. Ruth had already turned off Clan's hologram and it was only a matter of time before the enemy noticed that she was missing. Would the enemy come for Clan, or would she finish her hacking first. The outcome was dependent on her technique.

Part 10

The controller had been placed in the corner of a large room that was most likely a laboratory. The research equipment there was almost all for researching magic, which was all unfamiliar to Clan. As a result, she could tell where the controller was at first glance. It had an obvious difference to it from all the other equipment in the room.

“That's it. Then let's go to... wait, huh?”

On her way towards the controller, Clan noticed something else. It was a three meters large cylinder. It was the biggest thing in the room, so having caught her

interest, Clan approached it. Since it was right next to the controller, she suspected that it might be a weapon.

“... This is not a magic tool... I just hope that it's not a weapon...”

Clan knocked on the surface of the metallic cylinder, to figure out how thick it was.

And it seemed like she came over a button as the surface of the cylinder slid away and revealed what was hidden within. With the sound of her knock being light, it was clear that the metal was just a thin protective cover.

“W-What is this!?”

Revealed behind the cover was a transparent tank. From the sensation she felt when touching it, it was most likely made out of glass. A man floated within the tank. The man was soaked in a liquid different from water.

“Is he sleeping... or is it a corpse? Why would he be here... could it be material for a zombie?”

Clan had heard about zombies appearing in the shopping mall the other day. It wouldn't be strange if the materials for zombies were kept here. This was a magician's laboratory.

“But from the looks of it, it doesn't look like he will attack. Let's forget about him for now”

The control panel on the tank displayed that preservation was good and the state was stable. If she took that at face value, it meant that Clan could leave the man be for now. Besides, she had something important to do. She didn't have the time for other things.

“This is the real problem... let's see... it looks like it has been based on Forthorthe computers and communications, but some parts from the underground have been built in as well”

Approaching the controller, Clan felt some relief. It had been built using technology she knew. When it came to Forthorthe computers, she was more knowledgeable than anyone else. She had also gotten information on underground technology from Kiriha. With that, she wouldn't have to hesitate in

how she handled the controller.

“Now let's begin!”

Clan got into work right away. She removed the maintenance cover from the controller and revealed the inner workings before connecting her own computer to the device with some cables. The automated weapons' controller was protected by several layers of security, and she'd need to undo them each in order.

“... If I fail he'll laugh at me for being unskilled, if I succeed he'll say I have a terrible personality... no matter what happens, Bertorion is going to laugh at me...”

Clan sighed as she worked on her computer to undo the first layer of security. Hacking was a battle of wits between the hacker and the system's creator. If one were to put it some meaner terms, the one with the worse personality wins. Koutarou would probably tease her for that. Which irritated Clan to no end. And since she knew that he didn't really mean it, it made it even worse. In short, she wanted him to properly praise her.

“That said... all the people in this land are descendants of Forthorthe. Just because they're decendants of criminals, it doesn't mean they share the same sin. I'll just have to power through and accept that Bertorion will laugh at me”

The status of the automated weapons was sent to the controller in real time. Live data and footage was displayed on the screen. From it, Clan could tell that the war between Darkness Rainbow and Rainbow Heart had already started and thousands were clashing in the suburbs of the capital of Thorthe. Since it had only just begun, the casualties were still low, but it was still more than ten or twenty. Clan strongly felt that she had to stop this war as quickly as possible, both because she had been the one that sent them here, and because she was in the royalty of Forthorthe.

“... But if Bertorion laughs, I'll kill him!”

Clan complained about something Koutarou still hadn't said as she pressed the execution key on her computer. As she did, all of the instructions she had input into her computer were executed and began looking for a hole in the security.

And without much difficulty, the first layer of security was breached. When it came to scientific knowledge, Clan was superior to Elexis. It wasn't that hard to do with enough time. Clan moved on to undo the next layer of security. Based on the first layer, it seemed that there were three or four more layers to go through. With her skills, it would only take a few minutes to undo them.

A loud boom could be heard.

“W-What!?”

”... You can't use your powers like that, Purple-san!!”

“Don't get in my way, Rainbow!!”

That was when Yurika and Purple jumped into the laboratory that Clan was in, whilst in the middle of a fierce clash of spells.

Part 11

Purple currently had a lot of magical power. Because the gates of hell was still whirling by her side, when it came to pure amounts of magical power, Yurika was no match for her. However, Yurika remained optimistic even in that kind of situation.

There were lots of people stronger than Yurika in room 106, such as Theia. Moreover, when it came to personal strength, Kiriha was the weakest, yet she was always at the front in battles. Who knows what would have happened in this battle if she hadn't been around. Having experienced things like that, Yurika felt encouraged.

When she started thinking to herself, 'What would Theia do?', 'What would Kiriha do?', she understood that there were still ways to fight Purple. She probably stood no chance in a straight up battle, but Purple was casually brandishing a strong power. This was like suddenly turning a familiar weapon several sizes larger. While the power behind the spells was terrific, they were harder to control than normal, and it took more time to cast. If Yurika calmly

observed Purple and appropriately used defensive spells and evasion to her advantage, she could still avoid the attacks.

“Damn Rainbow, stop running around like a little coward!! However, it all ends with this!! Negative Energy Burst!!”

Purple used the dark energy she had drawn out from the gates of hell and had it explode in an attempt to blow up Yurika. Her irritation of not having been able to finish off Yurika up until now was turned into negative energy, making the power of her magic reach its strongest point so far.

The power of the blast is inversely proportional to the distance, and its energy type is negative spiritual energy!!

However, Yurika was able to divine the correct way to defend herself based on Purple's behavior. She had learned that the pressure and blast of an explosion was related to distance alongside Koutarou the other day. She also chose not to use a general-purpose defensive barrier, but decided that using a spell that specialized in blocking Purple's negative spiritual energy was more efficient.

“Double Cast – Push – And – Protection From Soul Energy!!”

Yurika jumped backwards while activating two spells at the same time. As they could both be activated at the same time, neither were high level spells. However, it was incredibly effective in protecting her from Purple's spell.

The first spell Yurika used pushed her even further back as she jumped. And at the same time as she landed and lowered her posture, the shield she had cast next appeared before her eyes. Purple's spell was unleashed the next moment, yet the supposedly powerful spell was blocked by Yurika.

This was the result of a splendid combination of evasive maneuver, a spell that supplemented her movement and a specialized defense. Yurika distanced herself from the center of the explosion, lowered her posture to reduce the area affected by the blast and activated her defensive spell to cover the absolute minimum area. Distancing herself from the explosion meant that blast was weaker, and the more concentrated defense meant that it was sturdier than normal, which allowed her to block Purple's attack. If she had remained in place, even if she used the ultimate defensive spell, she most likely would have been defeated.

“Curse you, again with the petty tricks!!”

Purple ground her teeth in frustration. Her supposedly massive magical power wasn't working on Yurika. She could neither believe it nor accept it. Irritated, she desired even more power. The only thing on Purple's mind was forcibly defeating Yurika with an even stronger attack.

As expected, there's an opening for an attack...

The more magical power Purple used, the more she was left open for attack after casting a spell. The reason for this was the same as using a large weapon. Yurika didn't overlook that opening and unleashed the most effective spell for the situation.

“Poison Cloud!!”

Past the tip of Yurika's cane, an orange, poisonous-looking cloud began shrouding around Purple. This was a cloud of poison created by Yurika's spell. The cloud itself obstructed Purple's vision, making it even harder for her to attack, and the cloud's poison attacked Purple. One spell had two effects, this was without a doubt the most suitable attack for the situation.

That coward has gotten better!

Purple temporarily stopped her attack and hurriedly escaped from the poisonous cloud. She wasn't foolish enough to try to continue her chant in the middle of a poison cloud. However, Yurika had expected that Purple would act like that.

“Now, Energy Bolt – Target Option – Auto Homing!!”

”Eeii, one petty trick after another!!”

Yurika had unleashed a magic arrow that tracked Purple on its own. It drew a shallow arc as it chased after Purple attempting to escape from the cloud.

“Don't take me lightly, Rainbow, I'm not someone who could be defeated by a weak spell like this!!”

Purple used the gates of hell to shield herself. The magical arrow that chased after her flew into the gates of hell and vanished. Yurika's strategy wasn't bad, but Purple's many years of experience had helped her out.

“In the end you're just a burden for Nana. Just getting a little better isn't enough to defeat me!”

Purple jumped out from behind the gates of hell and pointed her cane at Yurika again. She was going to blow Yurika away. Her irritation at not being able to defeat Yurika turned into power through the gates, and let her use an even more powerful spell to defeat Yurika.

A burden?

That was when she realized an effective way to defeat Yurika, and Purple would execute that method without mercy.

“It's over, Rainbow!!”

Purple shifted her aim over to Clan. Clan was leaving the battle to Yurika while she focused on undoing the security. That was the quickest way for them and Rainbow Heart to come out victorious.

“I won't let you!”

Protecting Clan was Yurika's duty. She stepped in between Clan and Purple and readied her cane. She would use her own body as a shield.

“Yurika, are you okay!?”

”I'm fine, please continue, Clan-san!!”

”Is that so!? You won't be able to dodge this one, Rainbow!!”

Purple and Yurika began casting their spells at the same time.

“Multiple Soul Energy Palette – Modifier – Empower!!”

”Greater Protection From Soul Energy!!”

Bullets of spiritual energy powered by a whirlpool of malice. A shield of spiritual energy born from the strong desire to protect her friends. These two spells made from completely different wishes clashed.

“Die, Rainbow Yurikaaaa!!”

The bullets that Purple fired made a deafening noise as it slammed into Yurika's shield. Purple had created a large amount of bullets, and they slammed into Yurika's shield like they were being fired from a machine gun. For each time

one of the bullets hit, the glow of Yurika's shield weakened.

“I won't loseeeee!!”

Yurika shouted out loud to pump herself up, and poured lots of magical power into her shield. This allowed her failing shield to block the rest of Purple's attack.

“You did well to hold that off!! But how about the next one!?”

”It will be the same regardless of how many times you try! I'm Rainbow Yurika, Nana-san's apprentice!”

The situation was just like Purple said. Unlike Purple who could draw out power from the gates of hell, there was a limit to Yurika's magical power. If they continued clashing like this, Purple would win before long. However, Yurika's eyes were shining. She wouldn't give up, even in this situation, and she was racking her brain in an search for a way to win.

The opening after Purple-san's attack is the same as before... but I've put my all into defending, so I'm not in any position to attack... in that case!!

Yurika held her cane ready as she moved forward. If she let Purple take the initiative, she would be pressured by Purple's powerful spells. So Yurika would make the first move to make Purple use spells that focused on speed rather than power.

“You're coming at me!? Soul Energy Strike!!”

”Quick Cast – Magic Shield!!”

However, for some reason, Yurika used a defensive spell. Moreover, it wasn't a specialized defensive spell, but a general-purpose one. Purple knew what the outcome that shield would bring, so she sneered at Yurika as she created several spiritual energy bullets.

“You fool!! Even if I'm using spells focused on speeds, that spell won't be able to block it!! In the end, a failure really is a failure!!”

Being a spell that worked against all kinds of attacks, it's defensive power was weaker. Yurika wouldn't be able to block Purple's attack. Even if she survived, she wouldn't be in a state to fight. She had successfully gotten Purple to use weaker but quicker spells, but that was the end of it. Purple was convinced of her

victory.

“Now, please do it!”

However, there was a continuation to Yurika's plan. There were actually allies of Yurika's that Purple hadn't noticed. They were the modified automated weapons that they had used to locate the castle of Sariachal. These modified automated weapons had been guided here by Clan and attacked on Yurika's command.

“Order accepted, self destructing”

“Oh no! Curse you Yurika, was this your—”

Yurika's defensive spell was so that she wouldn't get caught up in the automated weapon's self destruct as well. The blast from the modified automated weapons self destruct assaulted Purple.

Part 12

When the explosive flames cleared, only Yurika was standing. Purple was caught in the blast and lay collapsed on the hard laboratory floor. Seeing her friend safe, Clan let out an uncharacteristic cheer.

“You did it, Yurika!”

”No, this is thanks to your cooperation, Clan-san”

Yurika had come up with this plan because Clan had called out to her after moving the automated weapons towards Purple. It was Clan's advice to use the modified weapons.

“Now it's all up to you, Clan-san! Please hurry!”

“I know! I'm not going to let your efforts go to— Ah!?”

However, Clan's expression turned stiff the next moment. Behind Yurika, the wounded Purple had stood back up.

“Yurika, behind you!!”

“Eh...?”

Hearing Clan's words, Yurika hurriedly turned around. However, by that time, Purple had already launched her attack.

“Ahahahaha, you're too weak on the finish, Rainbow Yurikaaaaa!!”

A pitch black mass of spiritual energy was launched from the tip of Purple's snapped-in-half cane. Purple had taken damage so its power was less than when compared to before. However, Yurika had completely let her guard down as she assumed the battle was over, Clan was too far away to protect her, and they had just had their ace in the hole, the modified automated weapons, self destruct. There was no longer any way for Yurika to block Purple's attack.

“Oh no, everyone is always warning me about it too—”

All Yurika could do was stare at the approaching spell. She had realized her own defeat. Just like when she was playing games with everyone, she would let her guard down at the very end and lose to a turnabout. Yurika felt that it was a truly fitting end for herself.

“You're fine that way, Yurika”

However, the moment before the spell hit her, a familiar back appeared in front of her. With a single swing of that person's sword, the ball of spiritual energy was erased.

“Nobody wants you to become some invincible heroine. There's no reason for you to win on your own. We will win together!”

“Satomi-san!!”

The back belonged to Koutarou. After flashing Yurika a smile for an instant, he pointed the the sword towards Purple and shot her a sharp glare.

Part 13

Koutarou had been able to chase after Yurika because Theia had woken up. The Combat Dress she was wearing detected that she had lost consciousness and taken means to wake her up. The safety precaution for equipment intended for space use came in handy. And having woken up, Theia fought against Elexis while Koutarou chased after Yurika.

Why does that girl have everything I've lost!?

When Koutarou appeared, a fierce rage and envy started burning within Purple. The appearances of Yurika and Koutarou reminded her of herself and her lover. They cared for each other, protected each other and did their best to live their lives. That was precisely the happiness that Purple had lost long ago.

Why does she not have it, but Yurika does. A blinding rage became one with her desire and her serious envy shook her mind. She was on the verge of exploding.

“Surrender, Purple. You can't fight any longer”

”Stop joking! I'd rather die than surrender!”

With her mental state like that, Purple completely refused Koutarou's demand to surrender. She knew that she couldn't fight anymore as well. However, surrendering meant that she had to give up on reviving her lover. To let go of her future happiness. There was no way she could surrender when Yurika was showing off her happiness. Consumed by her rage at this unfair fate and her severe envy of Yurika, she completely ignored her choice to surrender. She would grasp a happy future no matter what she had to sacrifice.

“Purple-san, you can't! If you fight anymore you'll—”

“I don't care! You don't understand anything about how it feels to lose something truly important!

Purple glanced at the man floating in the transparent tank for an instant.

Purple-san, you...

That was when Yurika saw very deep love within Purple's eyes. She could see that shine in her eyes for an instant within the whirling insanity and malice.

“I will sacrifice anything to fulfill this desire!! Even if my body is to break or my

soul is to shatter!! Because I'm going to reclaim my Kai's happy life!!”

Purple couldn't give up. Her life when she had been Marina had been just too happy. With her world robbed of that, the world had gotten so dry. And she had no reason not to sacrifice that world for her lover and her happiness.

“Oh gates of hell!! I'll pay any sacrifice, so give me enough power to kill them!! Uooooooo!!”

Purple didn't just provide the gates with her negative feelings, but she would give her own life and soul in exchange for magical power as well.

“Negative Energy Lance – Modifier – Maximize!!”

She converted that massive energy into a powerful attack in an attempt to defeat Koutarou and the others. It was an attack very similar to the dark arrow that Maki had created when she had stolen room 106's power. However it's size was much bigger.

“Purple-san!!”

“Yurika, stop. We need to stop that spell first!!”

“Y-Yes! Greater Protection From Soul Energy!”

“Clan, you help out too!!”

”I know. Focus deployment of space distortion field forwards, maximum power!”

In response, Koutarou, Yurika and Clan worked together to block the attack.Yurika's spell and Clan's barrier covered the three of them.

“Dieee, die and return to your true homeeee!!”

And Koutarou made a certain bet as Purple unleashed her spell. That was to destroy the floor below them.

“How about this!”

Koutarou swung Saguratin and the stone floor crumpled and collapsed.

“Kyaaaaaa!!”

“What are you doing all of a suddeeeen!!”

The three fell to the floor below, and not even Purple had expected that Koutarou would choose the escape downwards. As a result, the dark lance that was supposed to have scored a direct hit, was headed above them.

“Curse youuu!!”

Purple focused and tried to move the dark lance to get it ot hit them. However, the momentum was too high for her to be able to change the trajectory more than slightly, and it only grazed by the top of the three's barriers. The lance continued on, destroying the floor and eventually exploding.

Part 14

By the time Koutarou got up, rubble filled his surroundings. He was directly below the laboratory in what seemed to be a warehouse. Clan and Yurika were right next to him.

“S-Satomi-san... are you okay?”

“Yeah, somehow”

”Ouch ow ow... *cough cough* B-Bertorion, wasn't there a more elegant way to evade?”

“If I was more elegant, we would have been killed. Look at that disastrous scene”

“... You did well, Lord Bertorion”

”I'm impressed you can say that so shamelessly...”

Fortunately all three of them were safe. They had taken some damage from the fall and blast, and they were quite exhausted, but they could still stand up.

“We can't let our guard down yet, Purple-san is still around too”

Just as Yurika said that, Purple pushed aside some rubble and appeared. She had been caught up in the collapsing floor and fallen into the warehouse as well.

In her case, she had only been showered in some of the rubble, but without defense, the damage taken was overall the same. However, Purple had taken damage before and was covered in wounds.

“Please stop, Purple-san”

“No, there's no way I could stop. Why do you think I've been doing like I have up until now? If I stop here, that will all be for nothing. All that would remain would be crimes that had been commited without meaning. I will continue going forward until I can get Kai back!”

Purple dragged her body and approached Yurika, Koutarou and Clan. Spilt blood stained the path she took.

“You'll fight no matter what?”

”If you want to stop me, you'll have to kill me... I won't stop any other way!”

She could never give up on what she was trying to retake. She was already past the point where she could give up. All that was left for Purple was to reclaim Kai or die.

However, that was when a new path appeared before Purple. Something big came falling from the laboratory above.

It fell between Yurika and Purple and shattered. What was inside of it broke as well and was scattered alongside the metal fragments and glass shards. The moment she saw that, Purple stopped dead in her tracks. A few seconds later, she let out a scream as if she had witnessed the end of the world.

“Aaahh... AaaaAAaaaa, K-Kai... AaaaaaaAAA!! AAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!!”

What shattered before Purple's eyes was the glass tank containing her lover's remains.

Part 15

Koutarou had been the first to break the floor, however that was just a part of it. Purple's attack had without a doubt been the primary cause for the collapse. In her obsession with defeating Koutarou and the others, she had destroyed the remains of her lover with her own hands. It was a horribly cruel fate.

That fact caused her to lose her sanity. The existence of her lover's remains gave her hope that she would be able to revive him soon, which barely kept her sane. With that last support gone, her mind collapsed.

Purple's collapsing mind affected the gates of hell and sent it out of control. With control of the gates lost, it began expelling power without end. Using that power, Purple began doing two things. The first was to collect the scattered remains of her lover and integrating it with herself. The second was to destroy the reality which had lost all meaning to her. Purple wasn't aiming for anywhere specific and only cast her spells indiscriminately. She wasn't interested in destroying individuals anymore, but the entire world.

“Purple-san, please keep it together, stay sane!!”

“Let's go Yurika, it's dangerous here!”

”But, Purple-san!”

”If we stay here, we'll die soon! We'll need to get outside of here before we can do anything else!!”

Yurika wanted to help Purple. However, Koutarou stopped her. This situation was very similar to when Tayuma had started running out of control. Yurika's wish was correct, but Koutarou decided that it would be wrong to do that here and now.

“He's right, Yurika! Let's group up with everyone and think of a counter measure!”

”I-I understand... let's go!”

Yurika understood that Koutarou and Clan were right. That's why she agreed with escaping, despite her desire to stay.

Like that, Koutarou and the others left the castle of Sariachal. This castle had been the support for the Folsarians banished from the past Forthorthe for

hundreds of years. It was the only thing that they had to remember their far away true home. However, that precious castle was collapsing. All of their past and future was lost by Purple's hand. It was an ironic end for the castle that had watched over the history of Folsaria.

Advent

Part 1

Sunday, September 19

With the castle of Sariachal beginning to collapse, the battle between Koutarou and his allies and Darkness Rainbow was temporarily stopped as they all escaped outside the castle. Neither of them wanted to die along with their foe. They also had to save their collapsed allies, so they mutually agreed on a ceasefire without saying anything.

Darkness Rainbow used an underground escape tunnel and came out at the foot of a small hill by the castle. Maya, Elexis, Orange and Yellow were gathered here alongside the unconscious Crimson, Green and Blue. There were also plenty of soldiers who had escaped as well. Those conscious found themselves looking at the castle of Sariachal where they had been just before.

“El, things have gotten complicated”

“You're right. I had expected some unreasonableness, but... that was completely unexpected”

What had once been Purple now no longer had a human shape. She now had the appearance of a man and woman molded and mixed together. There were several arms and legs sticking out from her torso and her head was sticking out by a ridiculous amount. Not only was the appearance bizarre, but it was also over 20 meters in size. It was looking like a piece of modern art.

“Yellow-chan, why did Purple turn out like that?”

“I think she opened the gates of hell too much. She was then probably devoured when the power flowed backwards”

Having turned into something bizarre, Purple was destroying the surroundings. Sariachal had already exceeded its limit and it was only a matter of time before it collapsed. The appearance and actions of Purple matched the legends of the evil deity of chaos.

“Maya, should we think of that as the same as Tayuma?”

“Probably. They're drawing powers from different sources, but they both got too close to the chaos of malice”

”Which means... the mission failed. Even if we win the war, Folsaria will be ruined”

And if Purple had the same kind of power as Tayuma, even if Darkness Rainbow were to defeat Rainbow Heart they wouldn't be able to obtain Folsaria. They had no way of stopping the rampaging Purple.

Tayuma had been able to repel the Blue Knight's attack, so even if Elexis called in a battleship to use its primary weapon to attack, it most likely wouldn't work on Purple. Additionally, magical attacks had almost no effect, so the spells of Darkness Rainbow's girls wouldn't work. It might be possible using the method Koutarou and the others used to defeat Tayuma, but that would be hard for them as they were so biased towards magic. Moreover, they barely had any magical power left to fight with.

There was no longer anything Darkness Rainbow and Elexis could do. Continuing to fight any further was meaningless. Even if they win or lose the war, the outcome would be the same if Folsaria was ruined. Folsaria was small, so at the rate Purple was going, the entire country would likely be destroyed in a few days.

Elexis and the others had been aware that there was a risk to using the gates of hell, but they hadn't expected it to get this bad. This was a complete miscalculation.

“Maya, let's retreat”

“What about the boy and the others?”

”If anything, I'd want to place my hopes on them. If they can win against Purple, you will eventually get a chance to rule Folsaria”

”So we don't stand a chance against Purple, but we do against the boy and the others, huh... Okay. Yellow, Orange, are you fine with that too?”

“I think it's an appropriate judgment”

”No objections. I'm already exhausted”

In the end, Elexis and the others chose to retreat. In the current situation, the best outcome was to have Koutarou and the others defeat Purple. If they carelessly attacked Koutarou, the chances of that would lessen. Elexis and the others looked to the future and believed that withdrawing and recuperating was the best plan.

“Then you do that”

”Crimson and I will go save Purple”

However, Crimson and Green, who had just been woken up been their subordinates were against Elexis' and the others opinion. Having heard of the circumstances, they were against their allies judgment, and were planning on going to save Purple.

“Crimson-kun, what is that supposed to mean”

”Exactly what I said, girly man. Green and I can still fight. If we want Rainbow and the others to win, then it would be better to work together. If we play our cards well, we can even reclaim Purple. Don't you think it's a brilliant idea?”

Having been unconscious for a while, Crimson and Green still had some reserves left to fight with. Crimson's idea was that she and Green work together with Koutarou and the others, and once they win they would reclaim Purple, which would be the optimal outcome in terms of preserving combat potential.

“So that's what you mean. I don't think it's a bad idea... but it's dangerous”

It wasn't like Crimson and Green were unharmed. Fighting against Purple in that state was dangerous.

“I am well aware, but Purple is always taking care of us and there are subordinates that haven't escaped yet”

”We'll suffer heavy losses so we should make efforts to reduce the minus”

“Okay, then do as you wish”

It is a policy within Darkness Rainbow to not object to others intentions. It was dangerous, but Crimson and Green were right. That's why Elexis didn't try stopping the two any further.

Part 2

Meanwhile, Koutarou and the others were trying to escape through the castle's main gate. However, Purple was obstinately chasing after them while destroying the castle. Up until now, the castle's buildings were in the way, keeping Purple from catching up to them, but once they left the castle, there would be less obstructions, making it easier for Purple to move. Koutarou was thinking that they wouldn't be able to escape at this rate, and so he stopped before passing under the gate.

“Everyone, go on ahead! I'll keep it busy here!”

It would be hard for them to defeat Purple the way they were now. On top of Koutarou, there were only about five more that could fight. They were Yurika, Maki, Clan, Kiriha and Harumi. The remaining four were either unconscious or had used up all of their strength. If they were all present and able, they might have had the option of fighting, but that was difficult in their current situation. Currently, the best course of action was for Koutarou to attract Purple's attention while letting the others escape.

Besides, that is something I've created... if anyone has to fight, it should be me...

Koutarou had been the one that sent these people to Folsaria. And if it was the distortion in society that occurred from that which turned Purple into what she had become now, then Koutarou believed that he should fight himself. It wasn't something he could let the girls do. However, Yurika and Maki had a different opinion.

“Satomi-san, Maki-chan and I will stay behind too! We want to help Purple-san!”

”Don't be unreasonable!! We can't even properly fight her, how can help her!?”

”Please, Satomi-kun! Purple was desperate for the sake of the one she loved! Her methods may have been wrong, but her feelings are real! It's too cruel if she were to be destroyed because of that!”

Yurika and Maki were able to understand why Purple had tried to defeat Rainbow Heart after observing her behavior and laboratory. She would have to sacrifice many people for the sake of her desire, which would be unforgivable, but the two couldn't stay quiet and watch as Purple destroyed herself. Yurika and Maki were just girls as well. They didn't want to reject the love Purple held within her.

“They win, Koutarou”

”How gutsy of you to try and leave us behind”

”Satomi-kun, we're going too”

The remaining three, Kiriha, Clan and Harumi, agreed with Yurika and Maki. All the ones that could move were going to save Purple.

“Why are you all coming!? What about Theia and the others!? If we mess up, everyone will die!!”

If everyone fought, then there would be no one left to help Theia and the others who couldn't move to escape. If Koutarou and the others were to lose, then the rest would die as well. Koutarou objected.

“If that happens—”

“Koutarou, let me make one thing clear”

Kiriha pressed her thin finger onto Koutarou's lips to silence him as he continued to object. She then smiled and began speaking.

“It just means that we all wish for this. How could we live by leaving you here alone? Why doesn't the thought of creating nine more Purple's cross your mind?”

They would live and die together. The nine girls truly felt that way. None of them wanted to sacrifice one to survive. Purple, who had lost her lover, and Koutarou, who had lost his mother, knew how it felt to be the ones left behind.

“... What a stupid choice...”

Koutarou couldn't object to Kiriha. He understood the pain of being left behind very well. He couldn't imagine the girls being happy like that. But even then, Koutarou was still agonizing. He was reluctant to bringing the girls with him to a fight they had little chance of winning. While Koutarou was making a difficult expression, Yurika called out to him.

“Satomi-san, I think that's what it means to love someone”

”Yurika...”

”Or do you treasure us because of reason and calculations?”

“... No, it's probably because of a bunch of stupid decisions”

”Then let's go together, Satomi-san. Besides, you're the one who told me that I don't have to be a hero”

Yurika was confident that Koutarou would nod his head. That's why her smile at this time shone beautifully with confidence and love.

Part 3

Yurika's and Maki's plan for facing Purple was to sever off her connection to the gates of hell. Purple wasn't causing all of this destruction on her own. Her negative emotions were sent to the gates of hell, and the gates converted that into power, sending it back to her. So there should be a connection to allow for that. If they could sever that, Purple should be unable to wield that massive power, and her rampage would stop on its own.

Unlike Tayuma who had obtained vast power in an attempt to transform into a god, Purple had a weakness like this.

“I'm counting on you two!”

“Yes, please be careful, Satomi-san”

”Good luck, Satomi-kun, and everyone else too!”

Leaving Yurika and Maki back, Koutarou, Kiriha, Clan and Harumi headed towards Purple. In order to sever the connection, Yurika and Maki would need to cast a spell. In other words, they had to get closer to Purple. But by doing that, they would enter Purple's attack range, so Koutarou and the others would act as decoys to keep Purple from paying attention to Yurika and Maki.

“Yurika, you're better at dispelling than me! I will support you!”

“Please do! We'll settle this with the biggest spell, a four times incantation!”

”So we only get one shot, huh! I'll go with that too!”

Purple's magical power was dense, and she was always being replenished by the gates of hell, so she had an inexhaustible amount. So casting small-scale spells hardly had any effect. If they wanted to sever the connection they would need to go all out from the start. Yurika would cast the spell to sever the connection, and Maki would amplify it. It was the greatest spell they could cast right now.

“... Things sure have gotten confusing”

”You're right. I never thought things would turn out like this back then”

“Then let's settle it this time! You got that, Reios Fatra Bertorion!”

“As you wish, my princess”

Out of the four acting as decoys, Clan was the first to attack. With her large weapons, she had the longest range. What she had brought out this time was a beam cannon that gave her almost no mobility, but in return very high attack power. It was the same weapon she had used when combating Dextro's giant in the past Forthorthe.

“I'm sure everything is the same. I am seeing this as a continuation of my brethren's battle”

”Ane-san, the enemy's spiritual energy is increasing Ho! It looks like she's about

to attack Ho!”

“Karama, Korama, readjust the Spiritual Energy Field, optimize it to match Tayuma's aura”

”Pattern readjusted, but this is a big bet Ho! If she has a different aura from Tayuma things won't go so well Ho!”

“Either way, it can't be blocked by normal means. Now all we can do is pray for protection of the goddess of creation, or perhaps the goddess of dawn!”

With Koutarou and the others approaching, Purple's showed signs of attacking. Up until now she had attacked without a care, but now she focused her negative energy bullets towards Koutarou and the others. In response, Kiriha readjusted the haniwas' barrier with her previous battle with Tayuma in mind. There was the risk that the barrier would be useless, but Purple's attacks couldn't be blocked by normal means anyways, so there should be no loss in trying.

“Clan-san is right. Since the day I inherited her majesty Alaia's duty, this is my duty as well. This is everyone's battle”

Harumi helped decrease the risk. The sword shaped crest on her forehead and her long hair began emitting a silver glow, as she began her incantation in ancient Forthorthe.

“Come, spirits of the dead, gather, stack, enhance and display your great light! May the light flutter like a mirage and project our appearance! Appear! Mirage of the Holy Light!!”

Harumi spoke her incantation loudly and five more of each of them appeared. Her spell had created illusions of the group. This greatly reduced the chances of them being attacked by Purple.

“She's firing! Everyone get down!”

”Detecting attack, GOL is focus deploying a distortion field forwards”

Purple attacked the next moment. She fired her dark powers like a beam and swept through the area around Koutarou and the others. Fortunately, thanks to Harumi's illusion they evaded a direct hit. But even then, a portion of the energy

grazed them which the multiple barriers barely blocked.

“Alright!”

Once Purple's beam passed through, Koutarou used the power of his armor to take to the skies. Activating his emergency boosters, he sped towards Purple at great velocity. In his hands he was holding two swords, Signaltin in his right and Saguratin in his left. In order to break through Purple's defenses, the power of these two swords was necessary.

“It's our turn now!!”

Koutarou readied both his swords and thrust straight towards Purple like a meteor. Purple still hadn't fully finished her beam attack and even though she had noticed Koutarou's approach, she was unable to attack. All she could do was bring up her barrier.

“Let's go everyone!!”

Koutarou swung at the barriers. Clan's beam cannon, the haniwas lightning bolts and flames and Harumi's spell were all fired at Purple at the same time. Like with Tayuma, Purple's barrier blocked all kinds of energy, so attacking with various types was the most effective.

“Superior Amplifier!!”

“Greater Dispelling!!”

Immediately after Koutarou's and the others' attacks clashed with Purple's barrier, Maki and Yurika cast their spells. The magic circle Maki had created amplified Yurika's spell. And the bullet of magical power that the two had poured as much as they could into smashed into Purple.

Thanks to Koutarou and the others weakening it with their attacks, Yurika's and Maki's spell broke through the barrier.

“It broke through!?”

”Please, just keep going!!”

Maki and Yurika placed their wishes on the spell that they had given birth to together as it directly hit Purple's body. Having scored a direct hit, the bullet unleashed it's magical power and covered the entirety of Purple's body in a

orange light. It was a spell of nullification meant to separate Purple from the gates of hell.

”Guuugyaaaaaa”

Purple's two heads let out screams at the same time. While Yurika and Maki were trying to sever the connection, Purple enhanced her magical power in an attempt to prevent it. This created an intense tug-of-war through magical power. Enveloped in the orange light, Purple's body gradually shrunk. Yurika's and Maki's spell obstructed the flow of energy making it impossible to maintain that huge body.

”Goaaaaaaaaa!!”

However, when the body had shrunk by about 30%, the orange light disappeared. The dark powers increased alongside Purple's scream and erased the spell. And this time her body grew instead, it didn't take more than moments to reach her original size.

“She resisted!?”

“Everyone, run away!!”

Having returned to her original size, Purple opened her mouth wide and fired another beam. Koutarou and the others were already retreating and wouldn't get hurt. But that wasn't the problem.

“Not good, Yurika! We couldn't cut Purple off from the gates of hell!”

Maki ran up to Yurika with a stiff expression on her face and pointed out the problem they had. They had been unable to sever the connection, which was the absolute biggest problem in this situation.

The spell they just used was among the strongest they could cast, moreover Purple's barrier had been weakened due to Koutarou and the others attack. That allowed the spell to pierce Purple's barrier and shave off some of the power from the gate.

However, before Yurika's and Maki's spell could completely sever the connection to the gate, Purple repelled the effects of their spell. By now she had completely recovered her power and the effects of Yurika's spell couldn't be seen

any more.

Though the real problem was that Yurika and Maki couldn't use a spell more powerful than what they just had. Both technically and physically. Koutarou and the others couldn't use attacks more powerful. Because that had been all of it, Koutarou and the others couldn't cover for the deficit of Yurika's and Maki's magical power.

Koutarou and the others had used their strongest means to attack Purple, and it hadn't worked. That meant that they had lost. Their power wasn't enough to defeat Purple, let alone save her. It was a complete pinch.

“Clan, can you blow her away with the space-time repulsion shell?”

“I believe it's possible... but we'll need to retreat first”

”I'm sure she won't let us”

”This sure is a problem...”

“Karama, Korama, if you change the aura pattern to match Purple, how much will your attack power increase?”

“Her aura is almost the same as Tayuma, so the change will be very small Ho”

“Ane-san was spot on, so the attack won't be that different from before Ho”

”Maki-san, what if we wake up the fainted ones and have them help?”

”I think we can wake them up, but I don't think we have enough magical power to sever the connection”

Koutarou and the others were working out what they could do next, but they couldn't come up with any good ideas. In the end, the attack from everyone was their best bet.

“Yurika, what do we do?”

”In that case, lets use our last resort”

Yurika still had a plan. That said it was only a slight hope. Since all other roads had been cut off, it was the only option left with a slight possibility.

“What do you mean!?”

“That's—”

”Gooaaaaaaaaaa!!”

However, Purple wouldn't take it sitting down. Before Yurika could explain her final plan, Purple attacked. Using the dark power, she created many negative energy bullets and sent them flying towards Koutarou and the others.

Yurika was in the center of her aim. She had been the kingpin in the attack from before, and more than all, Yurika had everything Purple had lost. She absolutely hated Yurika. As long as she was in front of her, Purple would want to kill her.

“Mind connect!!”

“Alright, I'm counting on you, Crimson!!”

”Just let whatever happens happen!!”

However, that was when some unexpected reinforcement arrived. The group of three that had suddenly appeared stood in the way of Koutarou and the others, and Purple.

They combined their strengths to begin their attack. The first forecast Purple's attack and let the others know, the other reinforced a weapon with powerful flames and the final repeatedly fired the gun that had been reinforced, shooting down the oncoming energy bullets.

“Nana-san!?”

“Even Crimson and Green!? Why!?”

The reinforcements were Nana, Crimson and Green. Yurika and Maki were unable to hide their surprise as an unthinkable group was working together to fight.

“It just sort of happened! On my way here, I met these two!”

Nana had remained by Purple until Koutarou and the others could escape the castle. She waited until they had escaped before escaping the castle using a different route. While heading back to meet up with Koutarou and the others she had met Crimson and Green along the way.

“That doesn't matter!! If you have some plan then hurry up and do it!! Oh no!? She's coming, Crimson!!”

“Infernal Fireeee!!”

Purple continued her attack. The three were desperately blocking it, but they were being pressured. Seeing that, Koutarou stepped forward to protect the three.

“Satomi-san!?”

”Yurika, I'll leave the rest to you!! You do as you want!!”

Koutarou used Signaltin's and his armor's power to repel the energy bullets. Like Green said, there was no time to talk. If there was something to do, they would need to do it.

“She's right, Yurika-san! We will hold out here! You do what you need to do!!”

Harumi stepped forward a little to cover Koutarou and the other three. With Koutarou and Harumi joining, it didn't seem like they would be defeated right away anymore. Sensing that, Yurika made up her mind.

“Maki-chan, Clan-san, Kiriha-san, please gather!”

“What are you planning to do?”

“We four will merge, recover our magical power and sever the connection between Purple-san and the gates of hell”

”I see, so you could do something like that”

Being a magician, Maki understood Yurika's intentions right away.

Yurika and Maki had used up the majority of their magical power, but Clan and Kiriha who couldn't use magic still had magical power within them. The two didn't have talent for magic, so they didn't have all that much of an amount within them, but there was still enough to cast another two or three spells. Yurika's plan was to merge and make use of that magical power.

There was also another meaning to this merge. By merging several people, their abilities overlapped and increased, they would be more powerful than if they acted alone. In other words, it was a plan that allowed them to recover

their magical power and enhance their abilities.

However, there was a large risk with this method. There was no guarantee that they would be able to use magic after merging, they could also have a bad compatibility and be unable to merge in the first place, or have their abilities lower overall. It was also possible they might turn into something similar to Purple. That had been the reason why Yurika hadn't done anything up until now, but there was no time for doubts anymore. Yurika was planning on finishing it with this method.

“... What do you mean?”

“There's no time for discussion, if our power is needed, then use it as you please!”

”Thank you very much, Kiriha-san!”

“I don't get it all. Kii, what are you talking about?”

“... You'll understand soon enough, Onee-chan...”

“???”

Clan still didn't understand, but every second was precious. Yurika gave up on explaining and began her incantation.

“Temporary Fusion! Modifier – Stabilize – End – Overdrive!!”

An orange colored light began pouring out from Yurika's cane as she was holding it above her head. The light enveloped Yurika, Maki, Clan and Kiriha.

Please... please let this save Purple-san, let this save everyone!! God, if you are here, please lend us your power!! On our own we are this powerless!!

The orange light was Yurika's prayer itself. She wanted the union to succeed, save Purple, protect her friends and end the war. Yurika turned those powerful emotions into magical power and explosively increased the orange light's glow. Eventually the outline of the four began vanishing, and the girls turned into orange light and began shining. Those four lights melted into one and transformed into one big light.

”Gyaaooooooo!!”

Noticing Yurika and the others turning into light, Purple let out a fierce howl like that of a dog's or a wolf's. At the same time, she stopped her attack on

Koutarou and the others. Purple's instincts told her that the light was more dangerous than anything else. That was when Koutarou and the others finally noticed Yurika and the others. The four girls turning into light surprised them all.

“Just what did she do!?”

”I see, Yurika-chan, you're merging the four of you to enhance your magical power!”

Koutarou didn't understand what the light was, but Nana, being an expert in magic, could tell at first glance. However, Nana's expectation was a mistake.

“That light, I've seen it somewhere before... where was it...?”

“Green, isn't that!?”

“Yes. My forecasts are becoming a mess. It's coming!”

The orange light grew stronger and when it seemed like it was as bright as the sun, other colors started to mix in with the light. The new colors were blue, indigo and green. The four colored light entwined like the double helix of DNA and stretched upwards, growing thicker. The shine kept growing stronger.

Part 4

Immediately after the four colored light appeared, the fainted Theia and Ruth woke up. When they noticed the bright light filling up their surroundings, they stood up and looked around.

“What is this? What light is this?”

“I don't know... it seems like it's coming from near Master and the others”

As the two looked at the light in confusion, Sanae and Shizuka who were lying down nearby wake up as well and look at the mysterious light with them.

“It's a warm and kind light. I can't feel any hostility”

”It doesn't look like the enemy did it. When I'm bathed in this light, it feels like

my powers are returning”

“Now that you mention it, me too...”

Strangely enough, the wounds they had taken had vanished without a trace. The exhaustion that had been weighing them down had disappeared as well. Moreover, the spiritual energy and magical power that they had used up was recovering. So it seemed unlikely that this was something the enemy had done.

“However, Your Highness, that makes it even stranger. We don't have anyone that has an ability like that”

“You're right. I've never seen this power before. Maybe it's Nana?”

”No, I think it's Yurika, Maki, Kiriha and glasses that are making this light. I can feel their presence from it”

“So the four of them did something... we should go take a look. There seems to be enemies around too”

”Indeed, let's do that. Men, let's go!”

Even if they stayed here they wouldn't understand anything. If there were enemies around they needed to help out. With those two reasons in mind, Theia and the other three ran towards Koutarou and the others.

Part 5

When the light turned into four colors, Purple stopped her threatening and began attacking. The multiple heads opened their mouths wide and spew flames as if they were dragons.

”Guuuuuuuu, Gaaaaaaaa!!”

However, the color of the flames wasn't red but a very ominous black. It was like evil intentions were being spewed out as flames.

”Gaaaaa!?”

However, after flying forwards for a little, the flames vanished. The light filling the surroundings had erased them. As a result, the flames never reached Koutarou and the others. The light Yurika and the others were emitting was the opposite of the darkness that Purple was using.

Blue. Green. Orange. Indigo. The four colored light became even brighter and began shaking the world intensely. Immediately after that, the light that had only grown bigger began taking some shape. That shape was a girl around the same age Koutarou and the others.

“... Is that... Yurika and the others...?”

Faced with that girl, Koutarou was puzzled.

The girl that appeared should have been the merged form of Yurika, Kiriha, Maki and Clan. Yurika herself had said so, so there was no doubt about that. Yet, the girl's face was completely different from any of the four girls. Moreover, the color of her hair was different from all of theirs. She had a beautiful pure-white hair, and maybe because of a trick of the eye, but there seemed to occasionally be four colors mixed in. The outfit she was wearing as something looking like a kimono or that of a shrine maiden dyed by the same four colors. If anything, that outfit was close to Kiriha's.

And what stood out more than anything were the four globes around her. The globes were about as big as a soccer ball or a volleyball, and seemed to be made from a transparent material like glass. Each globe had a different color, and like with the outfit and hair, those colors were orange, green, indigo and blue. The four globes moved around in the air as if they were orbiting the girl.

She looks less like Yurika and the others... and more like that statue in the temple...

The girl looked less like Yurika and the others, and more like a certain something in Koutarou's memory. That something was the statue that had contained Signaltin in the past of Forthorthe. The overall design was very different, but Koutarou felt like their faces were exactly the same.

But if Koutarou were to ask her who she was, he would want her to reply that she was Yurika and the others. She had something to her that made Koutarou feel that way. That gap in appearance and feel was what puzzled Koutarou.

”... I see... so that is what this is...”

The girl on the other hand seemed to understand a lot of things. Half of her questions were still unanswered, but apart from some core parts, she could imagine the answers from the answers she had already obtained.

Why did they have to go to room 106, and why did they end up holding hands. It was nothing special, it was all meant to happen. All to create a single miracle an endless time and a countless distance away.

”... The time of the promise is near... in order to not distort the free choice, I have the exclude the interference...”

The girl lightly kicked the ground. As she did, she flew towards Purple, leaving a four colored trail of light behind. Though there weren't enough colors, the arc that the girl flew in resembled that of a rainbow.

”Gaaaaaaa, Aaaaaaaaa!!”

Noticing the girl flying towards her with a trail of light, Purple let out a ferocious roar and bared all of her hostility. It was strange to see someone of Purple's gigantic appearance far beyond ten meters try to intimidate a small girl. However, Purple's reaction was correct. To Purple, the girl was the absolute strongest foe.

”Whirlpool of chaos, your conclusion is much too hasty”

”Goaaaaaaaaaa!!”

Roaring out in irritation, Purple threw seven spears at the approaching girl. They were spears of dark energy, made from darkening the seven colors of the rainbow. No existence would be able to escape destruction if hit by one of these.

”Just what meaning is there in a result you've forcibly created?”

However, the girl wasn't losing either. She gracefully stretched her right hand forwards and the four globes around her lined up in a square. The rainbow of only four colors turned into a shield and erased the seven spears of darkness.

“Gaaa, Guaaaaaaa!!”

With the spears not working, Purple swung her hands and feet around to repel the girl still approaching. She was trying to eliminate the girl with a direct attack.

”... I guess it can't be helped”

The girl was sad. She didn't like fighting, so she had hoped that Purple would stop. But Purple wouldn't stop, and since she couldn't just leave Purple be, she had no choice but too fight. That saddened the girl.

”Gyaaoooo!!”

”... That's one”

The girl shot the green globe towards Purple. And as she did, the green glow disappeared from her hair and clothes. In contrast, the glow of the green globe grew stronger. It was as if she transfered it to the globe. The green globe struck a direct hit on the arm that Purple was swinging around. As it did, the green light within was released and erased Purple's arm. But its effect didn't end there. The other arms and legs around the area were erased as well.

“Gya, Gyaaaaaaaa!?”

Having lost several limbs, Purple was assault by an intense pain and let out a painful scream. And having lost her balance she fell to the ground.

As she did the ground shook because of her massive weight. This also caused the green globe, which had fallen to the ground first, to bounce up. When the globe came into contact with the ground again, something surprising happened. The globe began emitting light again and turned into a human.

“...!? T-This is!?”

The green globe had turned into Kiriha. She didn't know what had happened and simply stood there with a blank look of surprise. Kiriha had no way of knowing, but the energy the girl in question had used to attacked originated from Kiriha. Using up that energy in the attack, it became impossible to maintain Kiriha's transformation and she returned to normal.

We merged with Yurika's spell and I became a part of something bigger... and I was supposed to have understood something very important... but I can't remember. What did I learn there!?

Kiriha was puzzled having been separated from the girl. She was surprised at the suddenness but she was also having trouble remembering anything from the union. She couldn't help but feel impatient as she was supposed to have realized something very important.

”Ga, Gaaaaa!!”

While Kiriha was puzzled, the battle continued. The remaining limbs supported Purple's body and she spewed out dark energy from her mouth. The energy turned into black flames and attacked the girl.

”That's two...”

In response, the girl launched the orange globe towards the flames. Once more, the orange glow from her hair and clothes vanished and the globe itself grew brighter as it directly clashed with the flames.

The orange globe didn't stop despite coming into contact with the flames. Instead it erased the flames while flying straight towards Purple.

“Gyaaaaaa!!”

Purple roared once more. The orange globe came into contact with the head spewing flames and erased it just like the green globe had before. And once it had fulfilled its role, the orange globe transformed into a person as well.

“H-Huh!? That's Purple... r-right!!”

Clan appeared from the orange light. Just like Kiriha, Clan was confused. Seeing Purple suffering in front of her, she understood what had happened.

“My attack worked! … I don't know what I did though...”

Purple was in a terrible state. She had lost many limbs and a head and was suffering. She had taken a massive amount of damage, and Purple's body was wavering like it was a mirage. Because of all the damage she had taken, the body created from dark magical power and spiritual energy was becoming unstable.

”There she is!”

That was when the girl spotted a lone woman. The woman was drifting within the monster whose body was wavering like a mirage. It was Purple's real body that had been absorbed into the gates of hell.

”Let's go, us!”

The girl flew towards Purple's real body. Having used up two colors, the girl's rainbow consisted of only blue and indigo now. But even then, there was not even a hint of hesitation in her expression. The girl, the girls of room 106, had decided to save Purple from the start after all.

”I will create a path! The remaining me should pass through that path and save her!”

The indigo globe was fired at the monster. The globe turned back into human, into Maki, mid air and she thrust her greatsword forwards, crashing into the

monster.

“I'll leave the rest to you, show them what you've got, Rainbow Yurikaaa!!”

Maki had turned back into a human, but she still hadn't lost the energy from the girl. She focused all of that energy into her sword and drove it into the monster's body.

Indigo colored light was released from the sword and reacted with the magical power and spiritual energy making up the monster's body, annihilating it. The heat energy created from the annihilation burnt away at the monster's body, creating a path to Purple.

“Thank you, Maki-chan!! I will definitely save her!!”

The girl left with only the blue light shouted like Yurika, and flew into the hole Maki had created without hesitation. As she jumped into the hole, the girl's body began glowing blue and started transforming into Yurika. By the time her voice could reach Purple, she had completely transformed into Yurika.

“Purple-san, please open your eyes!! Purple-san!!”

However, Yurika's voice only reached Purple's ears, not her mind. Purple had closed herself off, rejecting everything. The gates of hell was lending its power to that, making it even more impossible for Yurika's voice to reach.

“In that case, I'll be more forcible!! Please, Angel Halo!!”

Yurika raised the cane she had been fighting alongside with above her head and spoke her incantation out loud. She was going to sever the connection between the gates of hell and Purple and take her back.

“Divine Judgment – Modifier – High Concentration!”

Yurika cast a spell that unleashed holy light. This light had no effect on humans, but it had matchless strength when used against evil existences. Yurika used that light to attack Purple and the monster. The blue light that was protecting Yurika lent her its strength, and the power of the spell greatly exceeded that of Yurika's expectations. It burned away the monster's body, leaving only Purple behind.

“Purple-san, we're getting out!!”

Yurika embraced Purple's body and went backwards the same way she had entered. However, that was when some unexpected obstruction appeared. Not wanting to let Purple, its energy source, go, the body of the monster attacked.

“I-I won't lose after getting this far!!”

The monster's body transformed and created whips that it aimed at Yurika. Yurika embraced Purple to protect her and forced herself through the rain of whips.

“T-The exit!!”

Since the monster was only about 20 meters in size, Yurika reached the exit in short order.

“Kyaaaaaaa!?”

But in the next moment, she was caught by the monster's gigantic hand. By driving away Yurika, the monster had made Yurika jump at precisely when it wanted her to. Since all it had to do was block off her direction, capturing her was easy.

“O-Oh no, I have to do something!”

Yurika desperately struggled to try and break free from the monster's hand. However, her body was being grasped and she couldn't move or use magic. Thanks to the blue light protecting her she wasn't absorbed or crushed, but that was only a matter of time.

“I-I was almost there too”

“No, Yurika-chan, you won”

“Nana, aim for the wrist! That has the highest probability!”

“Got it!!”

That was when Yurika received reinforcements. Nana, Crimson and Green had come to help.

”Guoooaaaa”

Nana's bullets covered with Crimson's flames repeatedly struck the monster's wrist. This attack hadn't worked up until now, but with Purple separated from

the monster, that was no longer a problem. Nana focused the bullets on a single point and blew off the monster's hand from the wrist. At the same time, the strength in the hand weakened, causing Yurika and Purple to fall out of it.

“Purple!”

Crimson caught Purple as she fell through the air.

“I'll leave the rest to you, Crimson-san!”

“You don't have to tell me twice!!

Seeing Crimson retreat to the back with Purple, Yurika regained her balance midair and faced off against the monster once more. The monster had grown weaker because it had lost Purple, but it could still maintain its form. Defeating it was Yurika's last job.

“Good job, Yurika!”

“Satomi-san!?”

“We're here too!”

That was when Koutarou and the others gathered. It wasn't just those who had been fighting, but also those who had been unconscious as well. Yurika's friends were all here.

“What should we do, Yurika?”

“All we have to do is defeat that and close the gates of hell”

“Okay. Everyone, give it one last push!”

””Yes!””

Koutarou and the girls showed bright expressions. They still couldn't let their guard down, but being able to confirm that everyone was safe played a big role. And that gave Koutarou and the others a strong determination to return home safely with everyone. Contrary to the weakening monster, Koutarou and the others were in their best condition.

“Yurika, let's focus the magical power on Signaltin”

“Yes! I'll put in the rest of what I have into it!”

”Then I'll do that for the glittering sword”

“We will do that too Ho-!”

Maki and Yurika poured magical power into Signaltin while Sanae and the haniwas poured spiritual energy into Saguratin. They were planning on focusing their power into one point to defeat the monster.

“Alright, we're going to back up Koutarou! Make a path for him!”

”Yes, Your Highness!”

“I guess we have to, give it your all, Uncle!”

”Got it”

“Kii, you shoot! You're better than me right?”

”Okay, then you support me, please!”

Theia, Ruth, Shizuka, Clan and Kiriha all got to work, opening up a path for Koutarou. Their attacks hit the monster's limbs one after another, preventing it from attacking. This was a job only these girls with their high attack power could do.

“... Satomi-kun, let's finish it with this”

”Yes. I feel like taking a long nap after this”

Harumi unleashed Signaltin's magical power and Koutarou sent his own spiritual energy to Saguratin. The two swords filled with the power of many shone silver and gold.

“... I'll leave the rest to you, Satomi-san”

”That's not right. You're in charge aren't you?”

”Right...”

She had done everything she could. She had no regrets about anything today. That's why Yurika confidently spoke with her chest puffed out.

“Defeat that thing, Satomi-san!”

”Leave it to me, Yurika!”

Koutarou flashed Yurika a small smile and charged the monster. Theia and the

others were opening the path. Approaching it was easy.

“... Hey, Theia-chan”

“What, Yurika?”

”Satomi-san said that heroes aren't needed, but...”

”Yeah...”

”Satomi-san really is a hero to me”

”Isn't it fine for others to feel that way?”

“Aha, you might be right...”

And so Koutarou swung his swords as the girls watched on. The attack filled with Koutarou's and the girls' desires splendidly cut the monster in two and the magical power and spiritual energy making up the monster's body completely disappeared.

Over the Rainbow

Part 1

Wednesday, September 22

Marina knew it was a dream. However it was simply too happy of a dream, so she pretended she didn't notice. It was a dream of the far away past where she spent every day happily with her lover, Kai.

“Hey, Kai. Let's go somewhere on the next vacation. Like Japan for example”

”Sightseeing in Japan is troublesome. The procedure is complicated”

”Don't you have any admirable thoughts like improving your lover's mood before the marriage?”

“... Are high-level techniques like that going to be demanded from me?”

“Only once”

”Okay, okay, I'll see what I can do”

Their work for today wasn't scheduled until afternoon, so they were peacefully spending time in the bed. The sun's light was pouring through the curtains and gently lit up the two smiling at each other. It was a pleasant, peaceful morning.

“Ah, you've got some split hair”

”Because you're always putting so much stress on me”

“Geez, stupid”

”Ow”

It wasn't anything special. It was just a very normal morning. So was yesterday, and the day before that. That's why she believed tomorrow and the day after

would be the same. However, she was wrong. Marina now knew just how valuable that normal morning was.

“... Why are you crying?”

That's why the dream starting diverging from the past. Marina hadn't cried her in the past. She had believed this morning was only natural.

“I spent such wonderful days... when I thought of that, my tears won't stop”

Overflowing with emotions, Marina admitted that this was a dream. She couldn't play it off anymore.

“I know how you feel. Ever since then, there hasn't been a day I felt like that. That's why I came to visit you”

”... Kai? A-Are you...”

The words Kai spoke pointed to a certain truth. Shaken up, Marina timidly tried to confirm it.

“Hm?”

”... the real, Kai...?”

“What else could I be?”

“That's not what I mean... are you a product of my dream or not”

”I wonder, I don't know either. But I believe I'm the real me”

Assuming that this wasn't a normal dream, but that Kai's soul had entered her dream was the most happy interpretation.

“Then... why didn't you visit me until today?”

”I wanted to, but you were so focused on reviving me that you could never hear me”

It wasn't like Kai was trying to bully her. Even though he called out to Marina, his voice didn't reach her heart.

“Then, for all this time?”

”Yeah. I've been by your side all this time. It was frustrating not being able to do anything”

”Then I was doing something useless?”

“I guess. I was with you all the time after all”

”But...”

Marina became aghast. Marina had wanted to revive Kai so that they could spend time like this again. However, that desire had been too strong, and pushed Kai away.

“But for some reason, I was able to talk to you today. I'm sure your feelings changed after the battle”

Her complete defeat and loss of Kai's remains most likely created a change in Marina's feelings. At least that's what Kai believed, though he couldn't bring himself to say it.

“That might, be true...”

Marina had a hunch as well. The dark something in her chest had completely come off. That black thing had always rushed her, but now that sensation had vanished.

“If you get it, then hurry up and wake up”

”Eh?”

”There are people worried about you. Don't you remember? Two of your allies came to save you”

When Kai mentioned that, the faces of two people popped into Marina's head. Her memories after becoming a monster was vague, but she felt like she had seen their faces during the battle.

“Crimson and Green are? There's no way they would!”

”Why do you think that?”

”Why wouldn't I? We're Darkness Rainbow you know!? There's no way anyone there would be worried for someone else!!”

Darkness Rainbow wanted to freely use magic for their own desires. They didn't interfere with the others. They fought against common foes. To them, allies were something you used for oyur own purposes.

“Are you going to close off your ears and heart like that again? Just like you did with me?”

”...”

“Why don't you wake up and meet them. Look at them, listen to them and talk to them. Why don't you confirm if they really came to save you for their own sake”

”Kai... okay. I'll try”

”Good girl”

Kai patted Marina on her head. The sensation felt the same as in the past. Suppressing her urge to cry, Marina smiled at Kai.

“Kai”

“Hm?”

“Will I see you again?”

”That depends on your sex appeal”

”... Then I'll keep you here, with sex appeal”

“Don't use any more strange spells, okay?”

”Yes, I've learned my lesson...”

Marina wiped away her tears. She didn't break down crying, but she couldn't keep her tears back. Kai noticed that as well, but pretended that he didn't.

“See you, Marina”

”Yeah. See you, Kai...”

Their separation was a simple one. While there might have been tears, the two were smiling. Their separation was just a temporary one. The two of them believed so.

Part 2

When Purple woke up, she was in an unfamiliar room of a small hut. Humble furniture and a humble bed. It was more plain than the safe house she had used during her missions. Purple simply laid in bed, staring at the ceiling. She had the feeling she had seen an important dream, but she couldn't clearly remember it. She also felt like there was something she had to do. And because she couldn't remember that either, she continued staring at the ceiling.

After some time passed, Purple could hear voices from the neighboring room. There were two voices. Both women.

“... I wonder if that Purple is okay”

”She was absorbed by the gates of hell after all”

She had heard both of them before. They belonged to Crimson and Green. Her allies in Darkness Rainbow. Purple listened to the two, still lying down in the bed.

“If anything, she might stay like this...”

”Stop it, don't say something like that. Just imagining Purple sleeping forever sends chills down my spine”

”I wouldn't want to fight her either, it doesn't suit us, does it”

”I just can't get into it if Purple is not taking charge with her cool expression”

”That's right, Crimson, did you know? Purple doesn't like Krka fruit”

”Really!? Is there anyone who doesn't like that!?”

”That's why she's not acting cool from start to end. She lets her guard down from time to time”

“Alright, I'll look for something like that too”

The two were casually chatting. It was a conversation that really didn't matter. Purple's name had come up in the discussion but in the end, it really wasn't all that meaningful. Though she could understand that they were worried about her.

“Oh yeah, it's almost time for dinner”

“You're already hungry? Fufu, I'll get to making it”

”That's right, I'm going out for a bit”

”Why? It's already starting to get dark”

“I was thinking of going to get some Krka fruit. It's growing around here isn't it?”

”I give up... do you want to get Purple angry on purpose?”

It wasn't a conversation with meaning. There was no meaning to even talk. However, for some reason, Purple wanted to join in. She wanted to try spending time, just talking with someone about nothing. She couldn't help but feel that this was what she had to do.

So, Purple left her bed, opened the door and headed to the neighboring room. Crimson and Green were waiting for her there. However, maybe that wasn't all. Maybe, what she had lost so many years ago, was waiting for her there too.

Part 3

After the battle at Sariachal, Crimson proposed a deal with Koutarou and the others. The deal was that in exchange for the code that controlled the automated weapons, they would let Crimson and the others go. Because Clan had been unable to finish her hacking before the castle collapsed, this was a very welcome proposal.

Koutarou and the others accepted the deal and let Crimson and the others go. They then used the code they got to stop all of Darkness Rainbow's automated weapons. With that, Darkness Rainbow's main force was forced to surrender because of the massive loss in combat potential, and the war was stopped just before it could gain momentum.

Darkness Rainbow's forces agreed to disarm, and they were currently waiting on their punishment. However, the six leaders', Maya's and Elexis' whereabouts were unknown. Now that Darkness Rainbow's military was being disarmed, it was hard to imagine the leaders or Maya and Elexis making any major move in Folsaria or Earth. Based on those circumstances, Koutarou and the others were

worried that they might be headed to Forthorthe.

There were primarily two reasons as to why the leaders of Darkness Rainbow might head to the Forthorthe Galactic Empire.

The first was their excellence of soldiers. The people of Forthorthe only thought of magicians as fiction. Of course, they wouldn't think of girls carrying around canes as a threat. They could boldly enter various places and perform various duties. Whether that be sabotage or gathering information, they would be a big threat to the national defense. There would be many who would pay a fortune for their services. Though Elexis would surely be their primary employer.

The second was so that they could gather strength again. Rainbow Heart's hands didn't reach as far as Forthorthe. So it should be easy for them to gather strength under Elexis' protection, and eventually they would return to Folsaria with an army and seize political power. The original plan had been to travel to Forthorthe after gaining rule of Folsaria, but that order would be reversed. Looking at the bigger picture, there was hardly any difference from the change in order.

Koutarou had banished Maxfern and Grevanas from Forthorthe to different worlds, and as a result the People of the Earth and the magical kingdom of Folsaria had been born. And now, Elexis was about to return to Forthorthe with Maxfern's inheritance of spiritual energy technology, and Grevanas' inheritance of magic. In other words, those banished by Koutarou were about to return to Forthorthe and become a threat once more. Of course, Koutarou had no intentions of overlooking that. He believed that he would need to travel to Forthorthe in the near future.

Part 4

Ever since the battle in Folsaria, Koutarou would often be deep in thoughts with a serious expression on his face. The girls of room 106 noticed that and brought it up from time to time when Koutarou wasn't around. But what they

were discussing wasn't about what Koutarou was worried over. They already had a rough understanding of that. What the girls were worried about was that the expression Koutarou made when deep in thought was clearly quite different from that of a usual boy his age.

“Maki-chan, Satomi-san is making a cool expression again”

“That's no good... that's not like Satomi-kun at all”

Once the cosclub activities were over for the day and Yurika and Maki had returned to room 106, Koutarou was leaning against a wall, seriously contemplating something. As a result, he didn't notice that the had returned. His current expression gave off the impression of someone with an adamant will and excellent judgment. It was the same expression as during a battle, in other words, it was the expression of the legendary hero, the Blue Knight.

There had been a time when the girls thought of that expression as wonderful. However, by now, they couldn't really enjoy it. As time passed, they learned that Koutarou was a boy who fighting didn't suit.

“Let's rush in, Maki-chan!”

“... Yurika, you've changed a little lately”

“Eh? What has?”

”Fufufu, I was thinking how you're starting to look more like your master. Well, more importantly, let's rush in!”

“Ah, y-yes!”

Because of that, whenever the girls found Koutarou making a serious expression, they would get in the way of his thinking. This time was the same and Yurika and Maki rushed up to Koutarou and began using various wrestling moves on him.

“Satomi-kun!”

”Satomi-san!”

”Wah, w-what now!?”

“Satomi-kun, let me practice my headlock on you please!”

”Alright, then I will practice my figure-four leglock. Ei!”

Pretend wrestling was starting to become a daily occurrence in room 106, and the girls were all starting to become quite proficient. Even the non athletic Yurika had gotten good at a couple of moves. Because of that, Yurika and Maki were able to put Koutarou in their various locks without much resistance. Their surprise attack had been a big success.

“Ow ow ow, I give, I give up!”

Koutarou gave up without a fight. When he did, the two easily let go and smiled at him. Seeing their smiles, Koutarou let out a sigh of relief.

“... Geez... everyone's gotten really into pro wrestling lately..”

Because Koutarou didn't know the girls' circumstances, that's what it looked like to him. He hadn't expected that they were acting like this because he had a serious expression on his face from time to time. Seeing Koutarou like that, the two girls looked at each other and decided to reveal the reason.

“That's because you've been looking so serious lately, Satomi-san”

”Everyone is trying out their wrestling moves on you because they want you to return to usual, Satomi-kun”

“I am?”

Koutarou looked at the two with wide eyes.

“Yes. You do it a lot as well, remember”

”Well, yeah, I might...”

Koutarou could accept Yurika's point. Whenever Yurika looked sad, Koutarou would hit her or try out various wrestling moves on her. Because the frequency was so high around this time, Koutarou felt that it was strange.

“I'll be more careful not to worry you guys. At this rate, my body won't last”

”I think that's for the best. Everyone looks like they're ready to move on to the next stage”

”Next stage?”

”They agree that wrestling moves are putting a physical burden on your body,

so they're thinking of changing it to kisses”

”Kisses!?”

Koutarou let out a hysteric voice in his surprise. That would certainly reduce his physical burden, but it would greatly increase his mental burden. Koutarou believed kisses were dangerous to him.

“You idiot! Save those for more important times!! Don't waste them trying to change my expression!!”

”I still think this expression is better than the expression you had just now”

”If you don't like it, make sure to be careful”

”Okay, okay... Geez, when it comes to you guys...”

If he was this surprised just by hearing about it, what would happen when they really did kiss him. Koutarou promised himself to be a lot more careful. All he had to do was keep the girls from worrying.

“But... thank you, you two. For worrying about me”

After calming down, he realized that he had to thank Yurika and Maki. Because they had used wrestling moves on him, he had worried them. The two looked at each other once more, lightly held hands and showed bright smiles. With Koutarou returning to his usual expression, they had won.

“Don't forget, Satomi-kun. Just like how you don't want us to show magical girl-like expressions, we don't want you to show a blue knight-like expression...”

“I think it's unfair that Satomi-san gets to say it and we don't”

”... Yeah, you're right”

The girls could feel what Koutarou felt every day. The same was probably true between the girls as well. There was no way that it was okay for Koutarou to be running around with a serious expression on his face. This time, Yurika and Maki were right.

I really am blessed with good friends...

Though he didn't say it out loud, that was always on Koutarou's mind. He also wanted to treasure those girls. And treasuring someone was not a one-sided

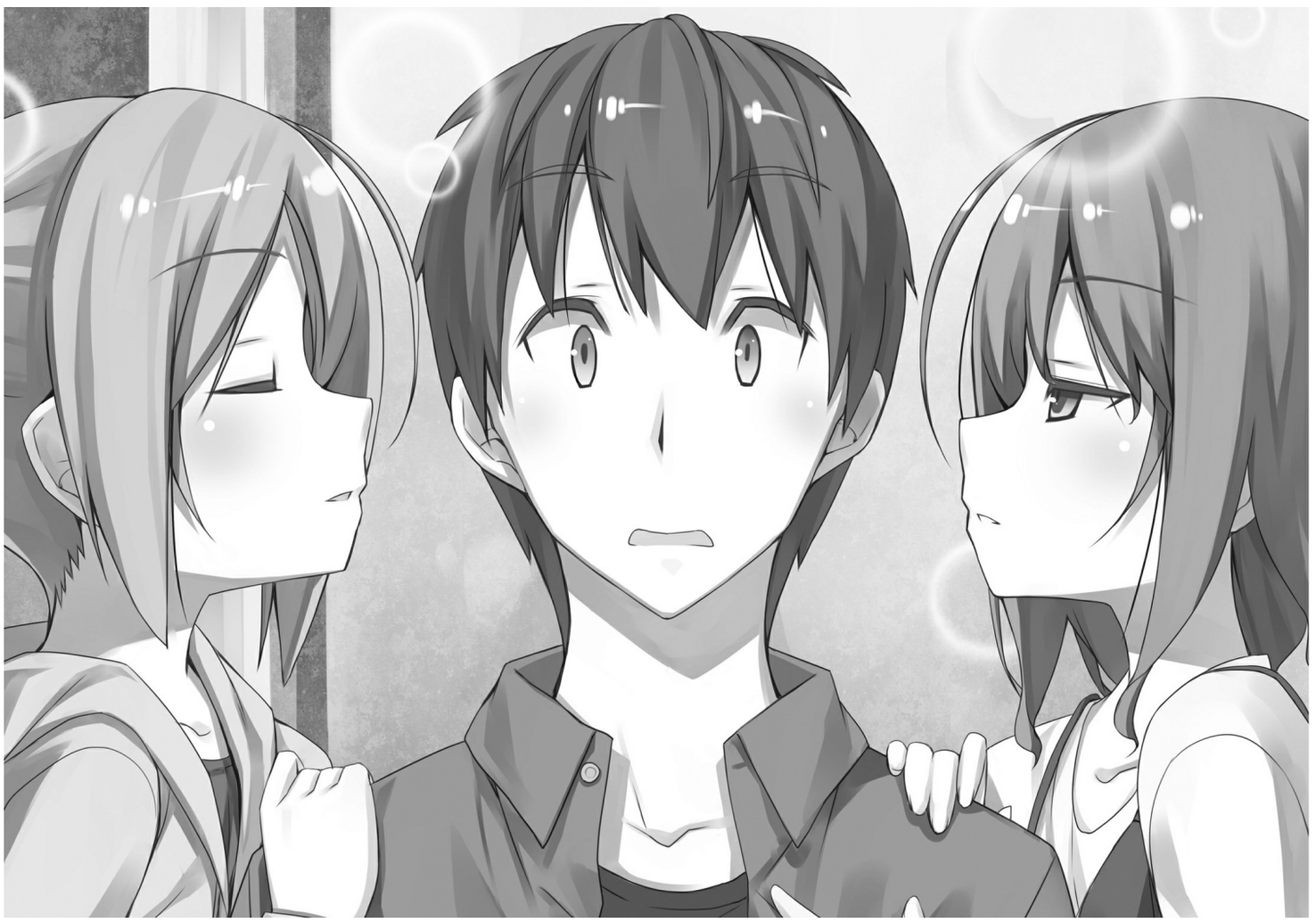
relationship. Koutarou reminded himself of that.

Seeing Koutarou's expression at that time, the two put a little more strength in their held hands. That alone was enough for the two to understand each other's feelings.

“Satomi-kun, could you lower your head a little?”

“Why?”

“Just do it, Satomi-san. Hurry”



“Okay...”

Koutarou listened to their demands and lowered his head a little. He figured he might have had bed hair or maybe there was something in it.

However, it seemed to be neither, as the two girls pressed their lips against his cheeks.

“Y-Y-Y-You idiots!! What are you doing!? I told you to save those for important times!!”

Koutarou jumped away from them and began scolding the two in a fluster. It wasn't like he hated them. Nor was it unpleasant. If anything, he was incredibly happy, but he didn't want either of them to have any regrets. He didn't want them to regret their actions later on.

“Satomi-san, now is one of those important times”

”You don't mind if it's at an important time, do you?”

They had been involved in a major battle, but everyone had come home safe. However, Koutarou was still showing an expression as if he was still fighting. His mind still hadn't come home. But after some wrestling techniques he returned to normal. Not everything was finally back to normal. There was nothing more important than that.

“... U-Uuuhh...”

Koutarou still wasn't done scolding them, but words just wouldn't come out. The reason was that Yurika and Maki were right. Koutarou agreed that right now was an important time as well.

“Ah, Satomi-san is blushing”

”That's a much better expression than before. Fufufu”

Despite Koutarou's suffering, Yurika and Maki were laughing with cheerful expressions, still holding hands. Because they knew that his worries now were slightly different from before.

Afterword

Long time no see, everyone. It's the author, Takehaya. This time I have been able to deliver Rokujouma no Shinryakusha!? Volume 19. This volume was close to volume 12 in terms of page count.

As for the contents, this volume continues on the magical girl arc from volume 18. The setting moves from Kitsushouharukaze city to the magical kingdom of Folsaria. There, facing the evil magical girls, Koutarou and the others stumble upon an unexpected truth. While that was unimaginable to Koutarou and the others, I suspect some of the readers have caught on. Was your hunch correct? That might be another way of enjoying this volume.

Though I believe Yurika is the biggest attraction this time around. At the start of the series, she had neither pride, courage nor love, she was always going with the flow and always making excuses. But in this volume she splendidly fulfills her duty. So splendidly in fact, that those looking on began to worry. Koutarou and the others don't want Yurika to take the spotlight. That's because they know what kind of person she is. Being strong doesn't mean you are meant to fight. Despite fighting not suiting her, Yurika chooses to fight in a desperate attempt to return to her usual daily life. Koutarou and the others think of that as irreplaceable, and so does Yurika. If you readers feel the same way, then part of Yurika's story in this work is a success.

That's right. I'm bringing up something I can mention now. Yurika played a big part this time around, but I made her so pessimistic in the beginning of the series because magic is too convenient. A magician was needed for the overall structure of the story, but if there had been a fully capable magician (like Yurika this volume), it would be too convenient and she might resolve all of the incidents on her own. So I gave her a lot of weak points, and made her a more dysfunctional magician. As a result, Yurika became the character most affected by the convenience of the story. It wasn't like I tried to do this on purpose.

Though you might not believe me, it's the truth. By the way, adding weaknesses to powerful characters to lower their capability is something other characters have as well. That's why, Kiriha who had little power on her own is a character without weak points. In that sense, Yurika and Kiriha are complete opposites. This is a trick to keep some of the characters from hogging all the spotlight.

Whoops, I almost forgot. There are actually two things I need to report. The first is that HJ Bunko's website, 'Read it! HJ Bunko' is regularly publishing short Rokujouma stories. There are also other works, so those interested, feel free to take a look.

As for the second, there will be a drama CD released with volume 20. The drama CD will continue from where it left off, and cover the first half of volume 8.5. Like with the last time, I believe there will be an alternate cover page.

With that I've just about run out of pages, so I will end this here. Finally I would like to give my usual regards. I would like to thank the editorial department for their help in publishing this work, Poco-san who somehow manages to make illustrations despite the many genres involved, and finally all of the readers who bought this book.

Then let us meet again in the afterword for volume 20.

April, 2015 Takehaya

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ This was called Nariachal in volume 8.5 but should have been Sariachal

Rokujouma no Shinryakusha!? - Volume 19

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